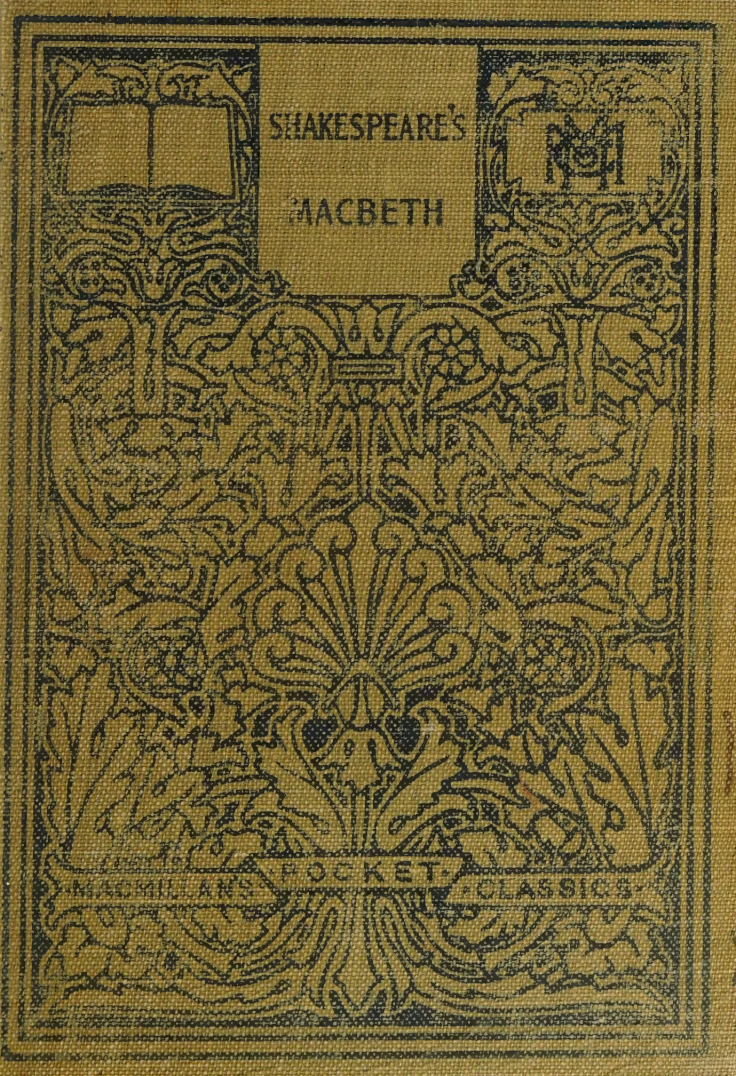
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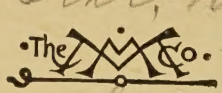
Figures of Speech.

(1) Simile

ex.- By thy cold bo
and serpent smile,

(2) Metaphor

ex.- Thy soul was
like a star, and dwel
apart;



(3) Personification

ex.- Old time is
a liar! We're twent
to-night!

(4) Hyperbole

ex.- They are swif
than eagles, they
are stronger than
lions.

5) Synecdoche, -
ex. - By ten o'clock we
descried seven of the
enemy's sail.
6) Metonymy
ex. - He made his livelihood by his pen.
7) Repetition
ex. - alone, alone, all,
all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea
8) Balance
ex. The old man pays
regard to riches, and the
youth reverences virtue
9) Apostrophe
ex. Milton! thou should'st
be living at this hour;
10) Interrogation ex. - What
is ex rare as a day in

17 yrs. was the duration of the play Mobeth.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

SHAKESPEARE'S

MACBETH

EDITED WITH NOTES AND AN INTRODUCTION

BY

CHARLES W. FRENCH

PRINCIPAL OF THE HYDE PARK HIGH SCHOOL
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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INTRODUCTION

The Historical Basis of the Play

Macbeth is the only one of Shakespeare's plays which is based upon episodes in Scottish history. While it is not in any sense an historical drama, the materials which form the groundwork of the plot were taken from Holinshed's Chronicles, to which Shakespeare went for the themes of no less than ten of his plays. While Macbeth is to be studied mainly for its tragic interest and its moral lessons, it will be interesting for the student to compare the bare historic materials with the rich life history into which the artist-poet has elaborated them. For this purpose the more important passages from Holinshed which Shakespeare made use of are given below.

Duncan, king of Scotland, who is introduced to us in the first act, succeeded his grandfather, Malcolm II., in 1031. The historic time embraced in the play begins in 1040, when Duncan was slain, and ends with

Macbeth's defeat by Siward, on July 27, 1054. The historic Macbeth, however, escaped from the battle and was killed in August, 1057.

Act I, Scene II[1]

"After Malcolme succeeded his nephue Duncane the sonne of his daughter Beatrice: for Malcome had two daughters, the one which was this Beatrice, being given in marriage with one Abbanath Crinen, a man of great nobilitie, and thane of the Iles and west parts of Scotland, bare of that marriage the foresaid Duncane; the other, called Doada, was married unto Sinell, the thane of Glammis, by whom she had issue one Makbeth a valiant gentleman, and one that if he had not beene somewhat cruell of nature, might have beene thought most worthy the governement of a realme. On the other part, Duncane was so soft and gentle of nature, that the people wished the inclinations and maners of these two cousins to have beene so tempered and interchangeblie bestowed betwixt them, that where the one had too much of clemencie, and the other of crueltie, the meane vertex betwixt these two extremities might have reigned by indiffer-

[1] In the following pages the selections, all of which are taken from Holinshed's Chronicles, are arranged by acts and scenes in regular order.

ent partition in them both, so should Duncane have proved a courtly king, and Makbeth an excellent capteine. The beginning of Duncane's reign was verie quiet and peaceable, without anie notable trouble; but after it was perceived how negligent he was in punishing offendors, manie misruled persons tooke occasion thereof to trouble the peace and quiet state of the commonwealth by seditious commotions which first had their beginnings in this wise.

"Banquho, thane of Lochquhaber, of whom the house of the Stewards is descended, the which by order of linage hath now for a long time inioied the crowne of Scotland, even till these our daies, as begathered the finances due to the king, and further punished somewhat sharpelie such as were notorious offendors, being assailed by a number of rebels inhabiting in that countrie, and spoiled of the monie and all other things, had much adoo to get awaie with his life, after he had received sundrie grievous wounds amongst them. Yet escaping their hands, after hee was somewhat recovered of his hurts, and was able to ride, he repaired to the court, where making his complaint to the king in most earnest wise, he purchased at length that the offendors were sent for by a sergeant at armes, to appeare to make answer unto such matters as should be laid to their charge: but they augmenting their mischiefous act with a more wicked deed, after they had misused

the messenger with sundrie kinds of reproches, they finallie slue him also.

"Then doubting not but for such contemptuous demeanor against the kings regall authoritie, they should be invaded by all the power the king could make, Makdowald one of great estimation among them, making first a confederacie with his neerest friends and kinsmen, tooke upon him to be chiefe capteine of all such rebels as would stand against the king, in maintenance of their grievous offenses latelie committed against him. Manie slanderous words also, and railing tants this Makdowald uttered against his prince, calling him a fainte-hearted milke sop, more meet to govern a sort of idle moonks in some cloister, than to have the rule of such valiant and hardie men of warre as the Scots were. He used also such subtill persuasions and forged allurements, that in a small time he had gotten togither a mightie power of men: for out of the western Iles there came unto him a great multitude of people, offering themselves to assist him in that rebellious quarell, and out of Ireland in hope of the spoile came no small number of Kernes and Gallow glasses, offering gladly to serve under him, whither it should please him to lead them.

"Makdowald thus having a mighty puissance about him, incountered with such of the king's people as were sent against him into Lochquhaber, and discom-

fiting them, by mere force took their Capteine Malcolme, and after the end of the battell smote off his head. This overthrow being notifed to the king, did put him in woonderful feare, by reason of his small skill in warlike affaires. Calling therefore his nobles to a councell, he asked of them their best advise for the subduing Makdowald and the other rebels. Here in sundrie heads (as ever it happeneth) were sundrie opinions, which they uttered according to everie man his skill. At length Makbeth speaking much against the king's softnes, and overmuch slacknesse in punishing offendors, whereby they had much time to assemble togither, he promised, notwithstanding if the charge were committed unto him and unto Banquho, so to order the matter, that the rebels should be shortly vanquished and quite put downe, and that not so much as one of them should be found to make resistance within the countrie.

"And even so it came to pass: for being sent footh with a new power, at his entring into Lochquhaber, the fame of his coming put the enemies in such feare, that a great number of them stale secretlie awaie from their capteine Makdowald, who nevertheless inforced thereto, gave battell unto Makbeth, with the residue which remained with him: but being overcome, and fleeing for refuge into a castell (within the which his wife and children were inclosed) at length when he

saw how he could neither defend the hold anie longer against his enemies, nor yet upon surrender be suffered to depart with life saved, hee first slue his wife and children and lastlie himselfe, least if he had yielded simplie, he should have beene executed in most cruell wise for an example to other. Makbeth entring into the castell by the gates, as then set open, found the carcasse of Makdowald lieing dead there amongst the residue of the slaine bodies, which when he beheld, remitting no peece of his cruell nature with that pitifull sight, he caused the head to be cut off, and set upon a poles end, and so sent it as a present to the king. The headlesse trunk he commanded to be hoong up upon a high paire of gallows. . . . Thus was justice and law restored againe to the old accustomed course, by the diligent means of Makbeth. Immediately whereupon woord came that Sueno, king of Norway, was arrived in Fife with a puissant armie, to subdue the whole realme of Scotland."

The army raised to resist Sweno was divided into three sections, commanded by Macbeth, Banquo, and Duncan. The events of the subsequent campaign which resulted in the defeat of Sweno are not dramatized.

"Shortlie after happened a strange and uncouth wonder, which afterward was the cause of much trouble in the realme of Scotland, as ye shall after

heare. It fortuned as Makbeth and Banquho iournied towards Forxes where the king then laie, they went sporting by the waie togither without other companie, save onlie themselves, passing through the woods and fields, when suddenlie in the middest of a lannd, there met them three women in strange and wild apparell, resembling creatures of elder world, whome when they attentively beheld, woondering much at the sight, the first of them spake and said: 'All haile, Makbeth, thane of Glammis!' (for he had latelie entered unto that office and dignity by the death of his father, Sinell). The second of them said: 'Haile, Makbeth, thane of Cawder!' But the third said: 'All haile, Makbeth, that heereafter shal be king of Scotland!'

"Then Banquho: 'What manner of women' (saith he) 'are you that seeme so little favorable unto me, whereas to my fellow heere, besides high offices, ye assign also the kingdome, appointing foorth nothing for me at all?' 'Yes' (saith the first of them) 'we promise greater benefits unto thee, than unto him, for he shall reigne indeed, but with an unluckie end: neither shall he leave anie issue behind him to succeed in his place, where contrarily thou in deed shall not reigne at all, but of thee those shall be born which shall govern the Scotish kingdom by long order of continuall descent.' Herewith the foresaid women vanished immediatelie out of their sight. This was

reputed at the first but some vaine fantasticall illusion by Makbeth and Banquho, insomuch that Banquho would call Makbeth in iest, king of Scotland; and Makbeth againe would call him in sport likewise, the father of manie kings. But afterwards the common opinion was, that these women were either the weird sisters, that is (as ye would say) the goddesses of destinie, or else some nymphs or feiries, indued with knowledge of prophesie by their necromanticall science, bicause everything came to pass as they had spoken. For shortlie after the thane of Cawder being condemned at Fores of treason against the king committed; his lands, livings, and offices were given of the king's liberalitie to Makbeth.

"The same night after, at supper, Banquho jested with him, and said: 'Now Makbeth, thou hast obteined those things which the two former sisters prophesied, there remaineth onelie for thee to purchase that which the third said should come to pass.' Whereupon Makbeth revolving the thing in his mind, began even then to devise how he might attein to the kingdome: but yet he thought with himselfe that he must tarie a time, which should advance him thereto (by the divine providence) as it had come to passe in his former preferment. But shortlie after it chanced that King Duncane, having two sonnes by his wife which was the daughter of Siward earle of North-

umberland, he made the elder of them, called Malcolme, Prince of Cumberland, as it were thereby to appoint him his successor in the kingdome, immediatelie after his deceasse. Makbeth sore troubled herewith, for that he saw by this means his hope sore hindered (where, by the old lawes of the realme, the ordinance was, that if he that should succeed were not of able age to take charge upon himselfe, he that was next of blood unto him should be admitted) he began to take counsell how he might usurp the kingdom by force, having a just quarrell so to doo (as he tooke the matter) for that Duncane did what in him laie to defraud him of all maner of title and claime, which he might in time to come, pretend unto the crowne.

"The woords of the three weird sisters also (of whom before ye have heard) greatlie incouraged him hereunto, but speciallie his wife lay sore upon him to attempt the thing as she that was verie ambitious, burning in unquenchable desire to beare the name of a queene. At length, therefore, communicating his purposed intent with his trustie friends, amongst whome Banquho was the chiefest, upon confidence of their promised aid, he slew the king at Enverus, or (as some say), at Botgosuane, in the sixt yeare of his reigne. Then having a company about him of such as he had made privie to his enterprise, he caused himselfe to be proclaimed

king and foorthwith went unto Scone, where (by common consent) he received the investiture of the kingdome according to the accustomed maner. The bodie of Duncane was first conveied to Elgin, and buried there in kinglie wise; but afterwards it was removed and conveied unto Colmekill, and there laid in a sepulture among his predecessors, in the yeare after the birth of our Saviour, 1046." (This date should probably be 1040.)

In the Chronicles of Holinshed no details of the murder of Duncan are given. It is probable that Shakespeare secured his materials for this scene from Holinshed's account of the murder of King Duff by Donwald, which is as follows: —

"Donwald conceived such an inward malice towards the king (though he showed it not outwardlie at first) that the same continued still boiling in his stomach, and ceased not, till through setting on of his wife, and in revenge of such unthankfulnesse, he found meanes to murther the king within the aforesaid castell of Fores where he used to sojourne. For the king being in that countrie, was accustomed to lie most commonlie within the same castell, having a speciall trust in Donwald, as a man whom he never suspected.

"But Donwald, not forgetting the reproch which his linage had sustained by the execution of those his kinsmen, whome the king for a spectacle to the people

had caused to be hanged, could not but show manifest tokens of great griefe at home amongst his familie: which his wife perceiving, ceased not to travell with him, till she understood what the cause was of his displeasure, which at length when she had learned by his owne relation, she as one that bore no lesse malice in hir heart towards the king, for the like cause in hir behalfe, than hir husband did for his friends, counselled him (sith the king oftentimes used to lodge in his house without anie gard about him, other than the garrison of the castell, which was wholie at his commandment) to make him awaie, and showed him the meanes whereby he might soonest accomplish it.

"Donwald thus being the more kindled in wrath by the words of his wife, determined to follow hir advise in the execution of so heinous an act. Whereupon devising with himselfe for awhile, which way he might best accomplish his curssed intent, at length got opportunitie and sped his purpose as followeth. It chanced that the king on the daie before he purposed to depart foorth from the castell was long in his oratorie at his praiers, and there continued until it was late at night. At the last, comming foorth, he called such afore him as had faithfullie served him in pursute and apprehension of the rebels, and giving them heartie thanks, he bestowed honorable gifts among them, of the which number Donwald was one, as he

that had beene ever accounted a most faithfull servant of the king.

"At length, having talked with them a long time he got him into his privie chamber, onelie with two of his chamberlains, who, having brought him to bed, came foorth againe, and then fell to banketting with Donwald and his wife, who had prepared diverse delicate dishes, and sundrie sorts of drinks for their reire supper or collation, whereat they sate up so long till they had charged their stomachs with such full gorges, that their heads were no sooner got to the pillow, but asleepe they were so fast, that a man might have remooved the chamber over them, sooner than to have awakened them out of their droonken sleepe.

"Then Donwald, though he abhorred the act greatlie in heart, yet through instigation of his wife he called foure of his servants unto him (whom he had made privie to his wicked intent before, and framed to his purpose with large gifts) and now declaring unto them, after what sort they should work the feat, they gladlie obeied his instructions, and speedilie going about the murther, they enter the chamber (in which the king laie) a little before cocks crow, where they secretlie cutt his throte as he laie sleeping without anie buskling at all: and immediatelie by a postern gate they carried foorth the dead bodie into the fields, and throwing it upon a horsse there provided readie for

that purpose, they convey it to a place, about two miles distant from the castell, where they staied and got certain labourers to helpe them to turne the course of a little river running through the fields there, and digging a deepe hole in the chanell, they burie the bodie in the same, ramming it up with stones and gravell so closelie, that setting the water in the right course againe, no man could perceive that anything had been newlie digged there. This they did by order appointed them by Donwald as it is reported, for that the bodie should not be found, and by bleeding (when Donwald should be present) declare him to be guiltie of the murther. For such an opinion men have that the dead corps of anie man being slaine, will bleed abundantlie if the murtherer be present. But for what consideration soever they buried him there, they had no sooner finished the work, but that they slue them whose helpe they used herein, and streightwaies thereupon fled into Orknee.

"Donwald, about the time that the murther was in dooing, got him amongst them that kept the watch, and so continued in companie with them all the residue of the night. But in the morning when the noise was raised in the kings chamber how the king was slaine, his bodie conveied awaie, and the bed all beraied with bloud; he with the watch ran thither, as though he had known nothing of the matter, and

breaking into the chamber, and finding cakes of bloud in the bed, and on the floore about the sides of it, he foorthwith slue the chamberleins, as guiltie of that heinous murther, and then like a mad man running to and fro, he ransacked everie corner within the castell, as though it had been to have seene if he might have found either the bodie, or anie of the murtherers hid in anie privie place: but at lengthe comming to the posterne gate, and finding it open, he burdened the chamberleins, whome he had slaine, with all the fault, they having the keies of the gates committed to their keeping all the night, and therefore it could not be otherwise (said he) but they were of counsell in committing of that most detestable murther.

"Finallie, such was his over earnest diligence in the severe inquisition and trial of the offenders heereiu, that some of the lords began to mislike the matter, and to smell foorth the shrewd tokens, that he should not be altogither cleare himselfe. But for so much as they were in that countrie, where he had the whole rule, what by reason of his friends and authoritie together, they doubted to utter what they thought, till time and place should better serve thereunto, and heere upon got them awaie everie man to his home.

"Thus might he seeme happie to all men, having the love both of his lords and commons: but yet to himselfe he seemed most unhappie as that he could

not but still live in continuall feare, least his wicked practise concerning the death of Malcolme Duffe should come to light and knowledge of the world. For so commeth it to passe, that such as are pricked in conscience for anie secret offense committed, have ever an unquiet mind. And (as the fame goeth) it chanced that a voice was heard as he was in bed in the nighttime to take his reste, uttering unto him these or the like words in effect: 'Thinke not, Kenneth that the wicked slaughter of Malcolm Duffe, by thee contrived, is kept secret from the knowledge of the eternall God: thou art he that didst conspire the innocents death, enterprising by traitorous means to doo that to thy neighbor, which thou wouldst have revenged by a cruell punishment in anie of thy subjects, if it had been offered thyselfe. It shall therefore come to passe that both thou thyselfe, and thy issue, through the iust vengeance of Almighty God, shall suffer woorthie punishment, to the infamie of thy house and familie for evermore. For even at this present, are there in hand secret practises to dispatch both thee and thy offspring out of the waie, that other may inioy this kingdome which thou doost indeavour to assure unto thine issue.'

"The king with this voice being stricken with great dread and terror, passed that night without anie sleep comming in his eies.

"Malcolme Cammore and Donald Barre, the sons of king Duncane, for feare of their lives (which they might well know that Makbeth would seeke to bring to end for his more sure confirmation in the estate) fled into Cumberland, where Malcolme remained, till time that Saint Edward the son of Ethelred recovered the dominion of England from the Danish Power, the which Edward received Malcolme by waie of most friendlie enterteinment: but Donald passed over into Ireland, where he was tenderly cherished by the king of that land."

Act II, Scene IV

"For the space of six moneths togither, after this heinous murther [that of King Duff] thus committed, there appeared no sunne by day, nor moone by night in anie part of the realme, but still was the sky covered with continuall clouds, and sometimes such outragious winds arose, with lightenings and tempests, that the people were in great feare of present destruction.

"Monstrous sights also that were seene within the Scotish kingdome that yeere were these: horsses in Louthian, being of singular beautie and swiftnesse, did eate their owne flesh, and would in no wise taste anie other meate. . . . There was a sparhawke also

strangled by an owle. Neither was it anie less woonder that the sunne, as before is said, was continuallie covered with clouds for six moneths space, But all men understood that the abbominable murther of king Duff was the cause heereof."

The rapid action of the play did not allow Shakespeare to show Macbeth in any other light than that of a merciless tyrant, abhorred of all men and passing rapidly from one crime to another. The following passage shows that a part at least of Macbeth's reign was characterized by a just though severe rule, during which the country prospered.

"Makbeth after the departure thus of Duncans sonnes, used great liberality towards the nobles of the realme, thereby to win their favour, and when he saw that no man went about to trouble him, he set his whole intention to maintein iustice, and to punish all enormities and abuses, which had chanced through the feeble and slothful administration of Duncane. Makbeth showing himself thus a most diligent punisher of all iniuries and wrongs attempted by anie disordered people within his realme, was counted the sure defense and buckler of innocent people: and heerto he also applied his whole indeavor, to cause young men to exercise themselves in vertuous maners, and men of the church to attend to their divine service according to their vocations."

Act III, Scene III

"But this was but a counterfet zeale of equitie observed by him. Partlie against his naturall inclinations, to purchase therebie the favour of the people. Shortlie after, he began to shew what he was, instead of equitie, practising crueltie. For the prick of conscience (as it chanceth ever in tyrants, and such as attain to anie estate by unrighteous means) caused him ever to feare, least he should be served of the same cup, as he had ministred to his predecessor. The woords also of the three weird sisters would not out of his mind, which as they promised him the kingdome, so likewise did they promise it at the same time to the posterite of Banquho. He willed therefore the same Banquho, with his sonne named Fleance, to come to a supper that he had prepared for them, which was indeed as he had devised, present death at the hands of certeine murderers, whom he hired to execute that deed; appointing them to meet with the same Banquho and his sonne without the palace, as they returned to their lodgings, and there to slea them, so that he would not have his house slandered, but that in time to come he might cleare himselfe, if anie thing were laid to his charge upon anie suspicion that might arise.

"It chanced yet, by the benefit of the darke night,

that, although the father were slaine, the sonne yet, by the help of almightie God rescuing him to better fortune, escaped that danger; and after having some inkeling (by the admonition of some friends which he had in the court) how his life was sought no lesse than his fathers, who was slaine not by chance-medlie (as by the handling of the matter Makbeth would have had it appeare) but even upon a prepensed devise: whereupon to avoid further peril he fled into Wales."

Act III, Scene VI

Macbeth requests Macduff to personally superintend the building of Dunsinane Castle, which the latter abruptly refuses to do. This may be the affront which Macbeth receives from the answer brought him by the "cloudy messenger."

Act IV, Scene I

Angered by the Thane of Fife's refusal to assist personally at the building of Dunsinane Castle, Macbeth could not "afterwards abide to looke upon the said Macduffe, either for that he thought his puissance over great; either else for that he had learned of certeine wizzards, in whose words he put great confidence, (for that the prophesie had happened so right, which the three faries or weird sisters had declared unto

him,) how that he ought to take heed of Makduffe, who in time to come should seek to destroie him.

"And suerlie here upon had he put Macduffe to death, but that a certein witch, whome he had in great trust, had told that he should never be slaine with man born of anie woman, nor vanquished till the wood of Bernane came to the castell of Dunsinane. By this prophesie Makbeth put all feare out of his heart, supposing he might doo what he would, without anie feare to be punished for the same, for by the one prophesie he believed it was impossible for anie man to vanquish him, and by the other impossible to slea him. This vaine hope caused him to doo manie outragious things, to the greevous oppression of his subjects. At length Makduffe, to avoid perill of life, purposed with himselfe to passe into England, to procure Malcolme Cammore to claime the crowne of Scotland. But this was not so secretlie devised by Makduffe, but that Makbeth had knowledge given him thereof: for kings (as is said) have sharpe sight like unto Lynx, and long ears like unto Midas. For Makbeth had in every noblemans house, one slie fellow or other in fee with him, to reveal all that was said or doone within the same, by which slight he oppressed the most part of the nobles of his realme."

Act IV, Scene II

"Immediatelie then, being advertised whereabouts Makduffe went, he came hastily with a great power into Fife, and foorthwith besieged the castell where Makduffe dwelled, trusting to have found him therein. They that kept the house, without any resistance, opened the gates, and suffered him to enter, mistrusting no evil. But nevertheless Makbeth most cruellie caused the wife and children of Makduffe, with all others whom he found in that castell, to be slaine. Also he confiscated the goods of Makduffe, proclaimed him traitor, and confined him out of all the parts of his realme; but Makduffe was alreadie escaped out of danger, and gotten into England unto Malcolme Cammore, to trie what purchase hee might make by means of his support, to revenge the slaughter so cruellie executed on his wife, his children, and other friends."

Act IV, Scene III

The dialogue between Macduff and Malcolm is freely paraphrased by Shakespeare. In Holinshed the dialogue contains four clauses; Malcolm's confessions of (1) incontinence, (2) avarice, (3) faithlessness — each clause including Macduff's answers, and (4) Malcolm's disavowal of his self-detraction.

Act V, Scenes II–VIII

"Soone after, Makduffe, repairing to the borders of Scotland, addressed his letters with secret dispatch unto the nobles of the realme, declaring how Malcolme was confederate with him, to come hastilie to Scotland to claime the crowne, and therefore he required them, sith he was right inheritor thereto, to assist him with their powers to recover the same out of the hands of the wrongfull usurper.

"In the meantime Malcolme purchased much favor at king Edward's hands, that old Siward earle of Northumberland was appointed with ten thousand men to go with him into Scotland, to support him in this enterprise, for recoverie of his right. After these newes were spread abroad in Scotland, the nobles drew into two severall factions, the one taking part with Makbeth, and the other with Malcolme. Heereupon insued oftentimes sundrie bickerings, and diverse light skirmishes; for those that were of Malcolmes side would not ieopard to come with their enimies in a pight field, till his comming out of England to their support. But after that Makbeth perceived his enimies power to increase, by such aid as came to them foorth of England with his adversarie Malcolm, he recoiled back into Fife, there purposing to abide in camp fortified, at the castell of Dunsinane

and to fight with his enimies, if they went to pursue him; howbeit some of his friends advised him, that it should be best for him, either to make some agreement with Malcolme, or else to flee with all speed into the Iles, and to take his treasure with him, to the end he might wage sundrie great princes of the realme to take his part, and reteine strangers, in whome he might better trust than in his owne subjects, which stale dailie from him; but he had such confidence in his prophesies, that he beleeved he should never be vanquished, till Birnane wood were brought to Dunsinane; nor yet to be slaine with anie man that should be or was born of anie woman.

"Malcolme, following hastilie after Makbeth, came the night before the battell unto Birnane wood; and when his armie had rested awhile there to refresh them, he commanded everie man to get a bough of some tree or other of that wood in his hand, as big as he might beare, and to march foorth therewith in such wise, that on the next morrow they might come closelie and without sight in this manner within view of his enemies. On the morrow when Makbeth beheld them comming in this sort, he first marvelled what the matter ment, but in the end remembered himselfe that the prophesie which he had heard long before that time, of the comming of Birnane wood to Dunsinane castell, was likelie now to be fulfilled. Neverthelesse he brought

his men in order of battell, and exhorted them to do valiantlie; howbeit his enemies had scarcelie cast from them their boughs when Makbeth, perceiving their numbers, betooke him streict to flight, whom Makduffe pursued with great hatred even till he came to Lunfannaine, where Makbeth, perceiving that Makduffe was hard at his backe, leapt beside his horsse, saieng: 'Thou traitor, what meaneth it that thou shouldest thus in vaine follow me that am not appointed to be slaine by anie creature that is borne of a woman? Come on therefore, and receive thy reward which thou hast deserved for thy paines!' and therewithal he lifted up his swoord, thinking to have slaine him.

"But Makduffe, quicklie avoiding from his horsse, yer he came at him, answered (with naked swoord in his hand) saieng: 'It is true, Makbeth, and now shall thine insatiable crueltie have an end, for I am even he that thy wizzards have told thee of; who was never born of my mother, but ripped out of her wombe': therewithall he stepped unto him, and slue him in the place. Then cutting his head from his shoulders, he set it upon a pole, and brought it unto Malcolme. This was the ende of Makbeth, after he had reigned 17 yeeres over the Scotishmen. In the beginning of his reigne he accomplished manie woorthie acts, verie profitable to the common-wealth but afterward, by

illusion of the divell, he defamed the same with most terrible crueltie. He was slaine in the yeere of the incarnation, 1057, and in the 16 yeere of king Edwards reigne over the Englishmen."

Cf. Shakespeare's "Holinshed." *The Chronicle and the Historical Plays Compared*, by W. G. Boswell-Stone.

DATE OF COMPOSITION

Shakespeare's works were first printed in small quarto volumes, each containing a single play, which began to appear as early as 1594. The text for the most of these quartos was obtained fraudulently from actors' copies, and was neither complete nor accurate. They were nearly all published without the author's permission and contrary to his wishes. Sixteen plays had been issued in this form before 1623, in which year the first collection of Shakespeare's works was published by his friends and associates, John Heming and Henry Condell. This edition is known as the first folio. Subsequent editions known as the second, third, and fourth folios, respectively, were published in 1632, 1663, and 1664, and 1685.

The first folio bears the following title:

"Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, Tragedies. Published according to the True Original Copies, London; Published by Isaac Jaggard and Ed Blount, 1623."

In this collection eighteen plays were printed for the first time and those that had been issued in the quartos appeared now for the first time in authentic form.

An incomplete edition of Macbeth had been published perhaps as early as 1610, but it first appeared in its present form in the folio of 1623. The exact date of its composition cannot be ascertained with certainty, but it was undoubtedly one of Shakespeare's later plays and is known to have been acted in 1610. From internal evidence it seems certain that it could not have been written earlier than 1601, and the weight of authority is in favor of 1605 or 1606.

THE THEME

The tragedy of Macbeth may be justly ranked as Shakespeare's greatest work. It is true that it lacks the careful elaboration which characterizes the most of his other plays, and is devoid of those finer touches of sentiment and playful humor of which he was so

eminently the master. But here his purpose is too serious, and the motive of the play is too stern and insistent to permit of any digression. From beginning to end it is a profound and philosophical study of the effect of sin upon human life and its resulting degradation and suffering. Yet it is more than this, for the deadly issues of evil-doing are worked out in all their fearful reality, and temptation with its ever-deepening shades weaves itself into the fabric of human life, before our very eyes.

The poet has given us no fancy picture, but with a stern and unfaltering purpose has created for all mankind an episode of the truest life history. The most consummate traitor of all the ages is no more a real personality than is Macbeth, and no more impressive moral lesson is taught on the pages of the world's literature, than that which comes to us in this the greatest of English dramas.

So serious a purpose admits of no trifling or delay, hence the action of the play is rapid. Its current of human passion flows swift and black, and, as we follow its rapidly descending course, we shrink with horror from the scenes of violence and of human woe which are disclosed, but a relentless fascination bids us follow on until its dark waters hurl themselves into the final abyss of desolation and ruin. So intense and unabating is the interest that the sympathies and emotions

of the reader are often subjected to a severe and almost painful strain.

The one absorbing subject for study and meditation in Macbeth is to be found in its ethical content. Other plays may be studied from literary or critical standpoints, but here the moral lesson is of such surpassing importance that all other considerations sink into comparative insignificance. The mechanism and movement of the play and its vocabulary should be given only sufficient attention to disclose the artistic skill of the poet, and to make his thoughts luminous.

Macbeth should be taught and studied as the most powerful chapter in literature upon the birth and development of evil in the human heart. The process is complete in detail from the first yielding to temptation until the nature of its victim becomes wholly perverted, and the punishment which he has invited descends upon him. Upon this central theme all the lights and shadows of real life are turned. With consummate art the poet makes his purpose dominate every detail. There is the background of innocence upon which the shadow of sin is cast. There is the environment of peaceful nature, in the midst of which deeds of tumultuous violence or of secret destruction are wrought. There are sunny skies, which shine down upon dark passions and cruel ambition; and virtuous natures which forsake purity, and abandon

themselves to vice and sin. But dominating them all the voice of the prophet never ceases its proclamation, "The wages of sin is death."

Nowhere is Shakespeare's analysis of human character more keen and exhaustive. Not content with tracing the outward manifestations of guilt and its human punishment he penetrates the innermost chambers of life, and discloses the purposes and motives which dwell therein. The gradual loss of reputation, influence, and honor, and the gathering power of vengeance are but the manifestations of a more fearful process which is being wrought in the heart, and is reaching out through all the functions and relations of life. With unmistakable clearness he shows that the real punishment of the criminal is not that which is meted out to him by the hand of man. This may be painful, humiliating, terrible, but it is soon over. His true punishment is that which is worked by his own hand into his own life and character for all eternity; a degradation and perversion of nature which he can never struggle against successfully. A man who yields to temptation and commits a crime may conceal it from all human knowledge; but he has planted the seeds of a retribution in his own breast from which he cannot escape.

Macbeth's punishment was not inflicted by the hand of Macduff, who slew him. This was but an

incident in his career. For years he had suffered the pangs of a moral deterioration, which were worse a thousandfold than the most cruel death. So powerfully are these sufferings, inflicted by an outraged conscience, depicted by the poet that the indignation and horror excited by his crimes almost give way to pity for his utter wretchedness.

Lady Macbeth, the guilty partner in her husband's first crime, illustrates the same great principle. She was less imaginative and better able to conceal her emotions, yet she gives many a hint of the remorse that is consuming her soul, until at last it is fully, though unconsciously, revealed in the deeply affecting sleep-walking scene.

The theme of the play may be well summed up, in the words of Mr. Hiecke, as: "the representation of ambition as a fiendish living force, driving on an heroic nature, that is possessed of high aims and capable of the grandest deeds, yet restricted by external barriers, to conspiracy against an anointed power, an established hereditary royalty, on fealty to which depends not only the prosperity of all, but the true, genuine happiness of the conspirator himself; hereby dooming countless numbers to destruction, as well as plunging the rebel himself into spiritual and, by the final moral concatenation, into physical ruin, but by these very means causing the power which has been outraged to emerge all the more gloriously."

METRICAL STRUCTURE

Macbeth, like the most of Shakespeare's plays, is written in dramatic blank verse, and the typical measure is iambic pentameter, e.g.:

> "If thóu | be'st sláin, | and wíth | no stróke | of míne,
> My wífe | and chíl | dren's ghósts | will haúnt | me stíll."
> —V., 7, 15, 16.

This measure is too monotonous and formal for constant use, and Shakespeare exercised much license in its use, especially since his plays were composed for the ear rather than the eye, and therefore depended for their effective presentation more upon the natural rhythm than upon the strict observance of the rules of metrical structure. He constantly introduced variations in the line chiefly, (1) by changing the position of the accent; (2) by introducing trisyllabic and monosyllabic feet, and (3) by decreasing the number of feet.

Illustrations of some of the more important of these variations are given below.

The first foot of initial lines is frequently a trochee, and the accent after a pause, whether at the beginning or in the middle of a line, is generally on the following syllable, especially if this syllable is emphatic:

"*Feéd and* | regárd | him nót. | *Áre you* | a mán?" — III., 4, 58.
"The hánd | le tóward | my hánd. | *Cóme, let* | me clútch thee."
— II., 1, 34.

An extra syllable is frequently added before a pause, especially at the end of a line:

"For míne | own sáfe*ties;* | You máy | be ríght | ly júst."
"For góod | ness dáres | not chéck *thee;* | wear thóu | thy wróngs."
— IV., 3, 33.

In Elizabethan English many syllables, which we now pronounce, were omitted in pronunciation:

"Be bright | and jóv | *ial amóng* | your gúests | to-níght."
— III., 2, 28.

Many contractions were then made which good usage does not now sanction, e.g. *canstick* for candlestick; *ignomy* for ignominy; *parlous* for perilous, etc. The forty-fourth line of the first scene in Act III. can be scanned only by contracting "God be with you" into *good-bye*.

Any unaccented syllable of a polysyllabic word may be softened or even ignored:

"With thém | they thínk | on.
Thíngs | withóut | all rémedy."

The plural and possessive cases of nouns in which the singular ends in *s, se, ss, ce,* and *ge* are frequently

written, and still more frequently pronounced, without the additional syllable:

"Their *sénse* | are shút." — V., 1, 29.

The letter *s* is probably not sounded in "horses" in the following:

"And Dún | can's *hórses* | (a thíng | most stránge | and cértain)." — II., 4, 14.

R and liquids in dissyllables are frequently pronounced as though an extra vowel were introduced between them and the preceding consonant:

"That cróaks | the fá | tal én | t(*e*)ránce | of Dúncan." — I., 5, 40.

Monosyllables, containing diphthongs and long vowels, are often so emphasized as to dispense with an unaccented syllable:

"'Gainst mý | captív | itý. | *Haíl,* | brave fríend." — I., 2, 5.

In some cases the last foot contains two extra syllables, one of which is slurred:

"The núm | bers óf | our hóst | and máke | *discóvery.*" — V., 4, 6.
"Is góne | to práy | the hó | ly kíng | *upon* his (on's) aíd." — III., 6, 30.

The speeches of the witches are generally written in rhymed verse, and the iambic is changed to the trochaic measure with four feet:

"Doúble, | doúble, | toíl and | troúble,
Fíre | búrn and | caúldron | búbble." — IV., 1, 20.

It will be noticed that the number of syllables to the line in the witch dialogues varies frequently, yet these variations never interfere with the rhythmical harmony.

Single lines with two or three accents appear frequently, but most naturally, at the beginning and end of a speech and in soliloquies. This is so common as not to need illustration. Sometimes a stage direction will explain the introduction of a short line:

"*This is a sorry sight.* (*Looking on his hands.*)" — II., 2, 21.

Many other minor variations occur, but enough have been cited to give a general idea of the peculiarities of meter in this play, and, perhaps, to show that Shakespeare pays but little attention to technical rules in his metrical structure, but is guided rather by his innate sense of harmony, which is, after all, the essence of poetic expression, and furthest removed from formal and mechanical composition.

QUESTIONS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLOT

After the play has been carefully read it may be more carefully studied by means of such questions as the following:

1. Do the witches furnish the first suggestion of crime to Macbeth, or has the temptation already entered his heart?

2. Does Duncan anywhere manifest jealousy of Macbeth? Does he seem to have any suspicion of treachery either at his hands or at those of Lady Macbeth?

3. In Scene 3, Act I., is there any reason to believe that the conversation, which precedes the entrance of Macbeth, was not written by Shakespeare?

4. In what different ways does the revelation of the witches affect Macbeth and Banquo respectively?

5. In the latter part of Scene 3, Act I., does Macbeth give any evidence of insincerity, or, at the least, of a lack of candor?

6. What does the proclamation of Malcolm as Duncan's successor contribute to the action of the play?

7. Are there any passages in the play which demonstrate the truth of Lady Macbeth's words: "Your face, my thane, is a book wherein men may read strange matters?"

8. Do you observe any evidence of insincerity in Lady Macbeth's greeting to Duncan?

9. Observe the conflicting emotions in the mind of Macbeth as he contemplates the murder of Duncan. What considerations finally overcome his scruples and lead him to the commission of the crime? Contrast his motives with those of Lady Macbeth.

10. Is there any reason to believe that Banquo suspects foul play? If he does and still takes no precautions to save the king, what does it indicate in regard to the influence of the witches' prediction on his mind?

11. Does Macbeth believe the bloody dagger to be real or "a false creation proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain"?

12. Study carefully the passage beginning, "Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more.'" What phase of Macbeth's character does this illustrate? Would such words be naturally expected from a man who has just committed a horrible murder?

13. Does the "Porter" scene contribute anything to the development of the plot? Would there not be a distinct loss if it were omitted?

14. Is Macbeth successful in his attempts to fix suspicion on some one else?

15. Is there anything in Act II. to show that Macbeth was suspected by any one? If so, by whom, and on what grounds?

16. Why does Macbeth fear Banquo?

17. Why does Macbeth conceal his plot against Banquo from his wife? What change in their relations to each other is indicated by this fact?

18. In the carrying out of the plot against Banquo why is a third murderer introduced? Is there anything to indicate that this was Macbeth?

19. What artistic purpose does the introduction of the ghost serve? What is its function in the development of the plot? Is there any evidence in the text to show that Shakespeare intended this ghost to be accepted merely as the product of Macbeth's overwrought fancy?

20. What does the "Witch" scene in Act IV. contribute to the play? Would the action of the play have been complete without it?

21. Is Macduff justified in fleeing from Scotland? Why should Macbeth seek to put him to death?

22. Why is the pathetic episode at Macduff's castle introduced? What does it show in regard to Macbeth's moral decline? By what distinct steps has his conscience become sufficiently hardened to render the commission of this crime possible?

23. Why does Malcolm indulge in self-depreciation? What is gained by the introduction of this conversation between Malcolm and Macduff?

24. How has Lady Macbeth been affected by her

evil-doing, as shown in the sleep-walking scene? How and why have her relations to her husband changed since she led him on to the murder of Duncan? Can you explain why complicity in the same crime has driven her to remorse, while it has led him on to the commission of still further crimes?

25. Contrast the Macbeth of Act V., Scene 3, with the same character in Act I., Scene 3.

26. Does Macbeth's reception of the news of his wife's death indicate that he has lost his affection for her?

27. Why has Shakespeare removed all, save one, of the scenes of actual murder from the sight of the audience in Macbeth, a practice which he does not follow in his other tragedies? Why is the murder of Macduff's son made an exception?

28. Give an outline of the downward career of Macbeth from the first temptation to his final overthrow.

29. What specific part in the working out of the central theme does each one of the following characters play? — Lady Macbeth; the Sergeant; the Weird Sisters; Duncan; Malcolm; the Porter; Macduff; Lady Macduff; Banquo.

30. Discuss the following statements: To what extent is each one true?

"'Macbeth' is the type of ambition, just as 'Othello' is the type of jealousy." — *Mézières.*

"In spite of every incitement to good, Macbeth gradually pursued the path of evil." — *Flathe.*

"Macbeth's is a nature predestined to murder." — *Leo.*

"Macbeth is not a type of ambition and its increasing inertia; he is rather the type of a pure and noble man driven by circumstance to crime and living the rest of his life in fear of the consequences which he knows must sooner or later follow." — *Pattee.*

THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DUNCAN, *king of Scotland.*
MALCOLM, } *his sons.*
DONALBAIN, }
MACBETH, } *generals of the King's army.*
BANQUO, }
MACDUFF,
LENNOX,
ROSS,
MENTEITH, } *noblemen of Scotland.*
ANGUS,
CAITHNESS,
FLEANCE, *son to Banquo.*
SIWARD, *earl of Northumberland, general of the English forces.*
Young SIWARD, *his son.*
SEYTON, *an officer attending on Macbeth.*
Boy, *son to Macduff.*
An English Doctor.
A Scotch Doctor.
A Sergeant.
A Porter.
An Old Man.

Lady MACBETH.
Lady MACDUFF.
Gentlewoman attending on Lady Macbeth.

HECATE.
Three Witches.
Apparitions.

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants, and Messengers.

SCENE: *Scotland; England.*

THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH

ACT FIRST. — Scene I.

A desert place.

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.

First Witch. When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain? °
Sec. Witch. When the hurlyburly's ° done,
When the battle's lost and won.
Third Witch. That will be ere the set of sun.
First Witch. Where the place?
Sec. Witch. Upon the heath.
Third Witch. There to meet with Macbeth.
First Witch. I come, Graymalkin.
All. Paddock calls: — anon!
Fair is foul, and foul is fair.° 10
Hover through fog and filthy air. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

A camp near Forres.

Alarum within. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox, *with* Attendants, *meeting a bleeding* Sergeant.

Dun. What bloody ° man is that? He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt °
The newest state.
Mal. This is the sergeant °
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil
As thou didst leave it.
Ser. Doubtful it stood;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together
And choke ° their art. The merciless Macdonwald —
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that ° 10
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him — from the western isles
Of kerns ° and gallowglasses ° is supplied;
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,
Show'd ° like a rebel's whore: but all's too weak:
For brave Macbeth — well he deserves that name —

Disdaining fortune,° with his brandish'd steel
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valour's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.°

Dun. O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

Ser. As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to come
Discomfort swells.° Mark, king of Scotland, mark:
No sooner justice had, with valour arm'd,
Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their heels,
But the Norweyan lord, surveying vantage,°
With furbish'd° arms and new supplies of men,
Began a fresh assault.

Dun. Dismay'd not this
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo°?

Ser. Yes;
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say sooth,° I must report they were
As cannons overcharged with double cracks;° so they
Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe:

Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
Or memorize ° another Golgotha,
I cannot tell —
But I am faint; ° my gashes cry for help.

Dun. So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;
They smack of honour both. Go get him surgeons.
[*Exit* Sergeant, *attended.*
Who comes here?

Enter Ross.

Mal. The worthy thane ° of Ross.

Len. What a haste looks through his eyes! So should he look
That seems ° to speak things strange.

Ross. God save the king!

Dun. Whence camest thou, worthy thane?

Ross. From Fife, great king;
Where the Norweyan banners flout ° the sky
And fan our people cold. Norway himself
With terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor
The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict;
Till that Bellona's ° bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,°
Confronted him with self-comparisons,°
Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,

Curbing his lavish spirit: and, to conclude,
The victory fell on us.

Dun. Great happiness!

Ross. That now
Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition;°
Nor would we deign him burial of his men
Till he disbursed, at Saint Colme's inch,°
Ten thousand dollars ° to our general use.

Dun. No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom interest: go pronounce his present death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

Ross. I'll see it done.

Dun. What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

A heath.

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

First Witch. Where hast thou been, sister?

Sec. Witch. Killing swine.

Third Witch. Sister, where thou?

First Witch. A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,

And mounch'd, and mounch'd, and mounch'd. "Give me," quoth I:
"Aroint thee,° witch!" the rump-fed ronyon° cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo° gone, master o' the Tiger:
But in a sieve° I'll thither sail,
And, like a rat without a tail,°
I'll do,° I'll do, and I'll do.
Sec. Witch. I'll give thee a wind.°
First Witch. Thou'rt kind.
Third Witch. And I another.
First Witch. I myself have all the other;
And the very ports° they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I' the shipman's card.°
I will drain him dry as hay:
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house° lid;
He shall live a man forbid:°
Weary se'nnights nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine:
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.
Look what I have.
Sec. Witch. Show me, show me.

First Witch. Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wreck'd as homeward he did come. [*Drum within.*
Third Witch. A drum, a drum!
Macbeth doth come.
All. The weird sisters,° hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine.°
Peace! the charm's wound up.

Enter MACBETH *and* BANQUO.

Macb. So foul and fair a day ° I have not seen.
Ban. How far is't call'd to Forres? What are these
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't? Live you? or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her choppy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.°
Macb. Speak, if you can: what are you?

First Witch. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

Sec. Witch. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

Third Witch. All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king° hereafter!

Ban. Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical,° or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace° and great prediction
Of noble having° and of royal hope,°
That he seems rapt° withal: to me you speak not:
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favours nor your hate.°

First Witch. Hail!

Sec. Witch. Hail!

Third Witch. Hail!

First Witch. Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.°

Sec. Witch. Not so happy, yet much happier.

Third Witch. Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:°
So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

First Witch. Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

Macb. Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more:
By Sinel's° death I know I am thane of Glamis;
But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,°
A prosperous gentleman; and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence
You owe° this strange intelligence? or why
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you.
[Witches *vanish.*

Ban. The earth hath bubbles as the water has,
And these are of them: whither are they vanish'd?

Macb. Into the air, and what seem'd corporal° melted
As breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd!

Ban. Were such things here as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten on the insane root°
That takes the reason prisoner?

Macb. Your children shall be kings.

Ban. You shall be king.

Macb. And thane of Cawdor too: went it not so?

Ban. To the selfsame tune and words. Who's here?

Enter Ross *and* Angus.

Ross. The king hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success: and when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend
Which should be thine or his: ° silenced with that,
In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day,
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,
Strange images of death.° As thick as hail
Came post with post, and every one did bear
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,
And pour'd them down before him.

Ang. We are sent
To give thee, from our royal master, thanks;
Only to herald thee into his sight,
Not pay thee.

Ross. And for an earnest of a greater honour,
He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!
For it is thine.

Ban. What, can the devil speak true?

Macb. The thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me
In borrow'd robes?

Ang. Who was the thane lives yet
But under heavy judgement bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combined
With those of Norway, or did line° the rebel
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
He labour'd in his country's wreck, I know not;
But treasons capital, confess'd and proved,
Have overthrown him.

Macb. [*Aside*] Glamis, and thane of Cawdor:
The greatest is behind. — Thanks for your pains. —
Do you not hope your children shall be kings,
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me
Promised no less to them?

Ban. That, trusted home,°
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange:
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
In deepest consequence.
Cousins, a word, I pray you.

Macb. [*Aside*] Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme. — I thank you, gentlemen. —

[*Aside*] This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill; cannot be good: if ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor:
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion°
Whose horrid image doth unfix° my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings:
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,°
Shakes so my single state of man that function°
Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is
But what is not.

Ban. Look, how our partner's rapt.

Macb. [*Aside*] If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me,
Without my stir.

Ban. New honours come upon him,
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould
But with the aid of use.

Macb. [*Aside*] Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

Ban. Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

Macb. Give me your favour: my dull brain was wrought

With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are register'd where every day I turn
The leaf to read them.° Let us toward the king.
Think upon what hath chanced, and at more time,
The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.

Ban. Very gladly.

Macb. Till then, enough. Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

Forres. The palace.

Flourish. *Enter* Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox, *and* Attendants.

Dun. Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not
Those in commission yet return'd?

Mal. My liege,
They are not yet come back. But I have spoke
With one that saw him die, who did report
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,
Implored your highness' pardon and set forth
A deep repentance: nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it; he died
As one that had been studied ° in his death,

To throw away the dearest thing he owed
As 'twere a careless ° trifle.
Dun. There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face:
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.°

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, *and* ANGUS.

O worthiest cousin!
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me: thou art so far before,
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,
That the proportion ° both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine! ° only I have left to say,
More is thy due than more than all can pay.°
Macb. The ° service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties: and our duties
Are to your throne and state children and servants;
Which do but what they should, by doing everything
Safe ° toward your love and honour.
Dun. Welcome hither:
I have begun to plant thee, and will labour
To make thee full of growing.° Noble Banquo,°

That hast no less deserved, nor must be known
No less to have done so: let me infold thee
And hold thee to my heart.
Ban. There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.
Dun. My plenteous joys,°
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow. Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
And you whose places are the nearest, know,
We will establish our estate upon
Our eldest,° Malcolm, whom we name hereafter
The Prince ° of Cumberland: which honour must
Not unaccompanied invest him only,
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine
On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,
And bind us further to you.°
Macb. The rest ° is labour, which is not used for you:
I'll be myself the harbinger, and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach;
So humbly take my leave.
Dun. My worthy Cawdor!
Macb. [*Aside*] The Prince of Cumberland! that is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
For in my way it lies.° Stars, hide your fires;°

Let not light see my black and deep desires:
The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. [*Exit.*

Dun. True,° worthy Banquo; he is full so valiant,
And in his commendations I am fed;
It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,
Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome:
It is a peerless kinsman.° [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

Scene V.

Inverness. Macbeth's castle.

Enter Lady Macbeth, *reading a letter.*

Lady M. "They met me in the day of success; and I have learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed me 'Thane of Cawdor'; by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with 'Hail, king that shalt be!' This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou

mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be
What thou art promised: yet do I fear thy nature;
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way: thou wouldst be great;
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness° should attend it: what thou wouldst highly,
That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,
And yet wouldst wrongly win: thou'ldst have, great Glamis,
That which cries "Thus thou must do, if thou have it;
And that which rather thou dost fear to do
Than wishest should be undone." Hie thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,
And chastise with the valour of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round,°
Which fate and metaphysical° aid doth seem
To have thee crown'd withal.°

Enter a Messenger.

What is your tidings?

Mess. The king comes here to-night.

Lady M. Thou'rt mad to say it:
Is not thy master with him? who, were't so,
Would have inform'd for preparation.

Mess. So please you, it is true: our thane is coming:
One of my fellows had the speed of him,
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
Than would make up his message.

Lady M. Give him tending;
He brings great news. [*Exit* Messenger.
The raven himself is hoarse °
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come you spirits °
That tend on mortal ° thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood,
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious ° visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless ° substances
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,

Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry "Hold, hold!" °

Enter MACBETH.

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter! °
Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant ° present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.
Macb. My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night.
Lady M. And when goes hence?
Macb. To-morrow, as he purposes.
Lady M. O, never 60
Shall sun that morrow see! °
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under't. He that's coming
Must be provided for: and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch;
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom. 70

Macb. We will speak further.
Lady M. Only look up clear;
To alter favour ever is to fear:
Leave all the rest to me.° [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI.

Before Macbeth's castle.

Hautboys *and torches.* *Enter* Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Banquo, Lennox, Macduff, Ross, Angus, *and* Attendants.

Dun. This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
Nimbly ° and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.°
Ban. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting ° martlet, does approve
By his loved mansionry ° that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here: no jutty,° frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendant bed and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed
The air is delicate.

Enter Lady Macbeth.

Dun. See, see, our honour'd hostess!
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you
How you shall bid God 'ild ° us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.°

Lady M. All our service
In every point twice done, and then done double,
Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honours deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old,
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,
We rest your hermits.°

Dun. Where's the thane of Cawdor?
We coursed him at the heels, and had a purpose
To be his purveyor: but he rides well,
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest to-night.

Lady M. Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, in compt,
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
Still to return your own.°

Dun. Give me your hand;
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,

And shall continue our graces towards him.
By your leave, hostess.° [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII.

Macbeth's castle.

Hautboys *and torches. Enter a* Sewer, *and divers* Servants *with dishes and service, and pass over the stage. Then enter* Macbeth.

Macb. If ° it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,
With his surcease,° success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'ld jump ° the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgement here; ° that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which being taught return
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,

Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties ° so meek, hath been
So clear ° in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead ° like angels trumpet-tongued against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent,° but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other.°

Enter LADY MACBETH.

How now! what news?

Lady M. He has almost supp'd: why have you left the chamber?

Macb. Hath he ask'd for me?

Lady M. Know you not he has?

Macb. We will proceed no further in this business:
He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,

Which would ° be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.
Lady M. Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since °?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale °
At what it did so freely °? From this time °
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"
Like the poor cat i' the adage °?
Macb. Prithee, peace:
I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.°
Lady M. What beast ° was't then
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere,° and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:

I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.°

Macb. If we should fail?

Lady M. We fail!°
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep—
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him—his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince,°
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbec° only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy° officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?°

Macb. Bring forth men-children only;
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be received,
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber, and used their very daggers,
That they have done't?

Lady M. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar
Upon his death?
Macb. I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.°
[*Exeunt.*

ACT SECOND. — Scene I.

Inverness. Court of Macbeth's castle.

Enter Banquo, *and* Fleance *bearing a torch before him.*

Ban. How goes the night, boy?
Fle. The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.°
Ban. And she goes down at twelve.
Fle. I take't, 'tis later, sir.
Ban. Hold, take my sword.° There's husbandry in heaven,
Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.°
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep.° Merciful powers,
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose°!

Enter MACBETH, *and a* Servant *with a torch.*

Give me my sword.
Who's there?

Macb. A friend.

Ban. What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed:
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess to your offices: °
This diamond ° he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up
In measureless content.°

Macb. Being unprepared,°
Our will became the servant to defect,
Which else should free have wrought.

Ban. All's well.
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:
To you they have show'd some truth.°

Macb. I think not of them:
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,°
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.

Ban. At your kind'st leisure.

Macb. If ° you shall cleave ° to my consent, when 'tis,°
It shall make honour for you.

Ban. So I lose none

In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,
I shall be counsell'd.°

Macb. Good repose the while!

Ban. Thanks, sir: the like to you!

[*Exeunt* Banquo *and* Fleance.

Macb. Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,°
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

[*Exit* Servant.

Is this a dagger° which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshal'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes° are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest: I see thee still;
And on thy blade and dudgeon° gouts° of blood,

Which was not so before. There's no such thing:
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep °; witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's ° offerings; and wither'd murder,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch,° thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides,° towards his design
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,
And take the present horror ° from the time,
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives:
Words ° to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.
[*A bell rings.*
I go, and it is done: the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven, or to hell. [*Exit.*

Scene II.

The same.

Enter Lady Macbeth.

Lady M. That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold °;

What hath quench'd them hath given me fire. Hark! Peace!
It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,°
Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it:
The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores: I have drugg'd their possets,
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

Macb. [*Within*] Who's there°? what, ho!

Lady M. Alack, I am afraid they have awaked
And 'tis not done: the attempt and not the deed
Confounds us. Hark!° I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.°

Enter Macbeth.

My husband!

Macb. I have done the deed.° Didst thou not hear a noise?

Lady M. I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry. Did not you speak?

Macb. When?

Lady M. Now.

Macb. As I descended?

Lady M. Ay.

Macb. Hark! °

Who lies i' the second chamber?

Lady M. Donalbain.

Macb. This is a sorry sight. [*Looking on his hands.*

Lady M. A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

Macb. There's one did laugh in 's sleep, and one cried "Murder!"

That they did wake each other: I stood and heard them:

But they did say their prayers, and address'd ° them

Again to sleep.

Lady M. There are two lodged together.

Macb. One cried "God bless us!" and "Amen" the other,

As they had seen me with these hangman's hands:

Listening their fear, I could not say "Amen," °

When they did say "God bless us!"

Lady M. Consider it not so deeply.

Macb. But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen" °?

I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"

Stuck in my throat.

Lady M. These deeds must not be thought

After these ways; so, it will make us mad. °

Macb. Methought° I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep" — the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleave° of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast, —

Lady M. What do you mean°?

Macb. Still it cried "Sleep no more!" to all the house:
"Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more: Macbeth shall sleep no more."

Lady M. Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there: go carry them, and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

Macb. I'll go no more:
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again I dare not.

Lady M. Infirm of purpose!
Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead

Are but as pictures: 'tis the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I'll gild ° the faces of the grooms withal,
For it must seem their guilt.° [*Exit. Knocking within.*
Macb. Whence is that knocking?
How is it with me, when every noise appals me?
What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine eyes!
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one ° red.

Re-enter Lady Macbeth.

Lady M. My hands are of your colour, but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*] I hear a knocking
At the south entry: retire we to our chamber:
A little water clears us of this deed:
How easy is it then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended.° [*Knocking within.*] Hark! more knocking:
Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us
And show us to be watchers: be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.

Macb. To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself. [*Knocking within.*
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

The same.

Enter a Porter. *Knocking within.*

Porter. Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter ° of hell-gate, he should have old ° turning the key. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub? Here's a farmer,° that hanged himself on th' expectation of plenty: come in time °; have napkins ° enow about you; here you'll sweat for't. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock! Who's there, in th' other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O, come in, equivocator. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor ° come hither, for stealing out of a French hose: come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock;

never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the primrose way° to the everlasting bonfire. [*Knocking within.*] Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter. [*Opens the gate.*

Enter Macduff *and* Lennox.

Macd. Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?

Port. Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock.

Macd. Is thy master stirring°?

Enter Macbeth.

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

Len. Good morrow, noble sir.

Macb. Good morrow, both.

Macd. Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

Macb. Not yet.°

Macd. He did command me to call timely on him:
I had almost slipp'd the hour.

Macb. I'll bring you to him.

Macd. I know this is a joyful trouble to you;
But yet 'tis one.

Macb. The labour we delight in physics° pain.
This is the door.°

Macd. I'll make so bold to call,
For 'tis my limited service.° [*Exit.*

Len. Goes the king hence to-day?

Macb. He does: he did appoint so.°

Len. The night has been unruly: where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down, and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air, strange screams of death,
And prophesying° with accents terrible
Of dire combustion and confused events
New hatch'd to the woful time: the obscure bird°
Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth
Was feverous° and did shake.

Macb. 'Twas a rough night.

Len. My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

Re-enter Macduff.

Macd. O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee.°

Macb. } What's the matter?
Len. }

Macd. Confusion now hath made his masterpiece.
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple,° and stole thence

The life o' the building.

Macb. What is't you say? the life?

Len. Mean you his majesty?

Macd. Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight.

With a new Gorgon: ° do not bid me speak;
See, and then speak yourselves.

[*Exeunt* Macbeth *and* Lennox.

Awake, awake!
Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason!
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself! up, up, and see
The great doom's image °! Malcolm! Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance this horror. Ring the bell.

[*Bell rings.*

Enter Lady Macbeth.

Lady M. What's the business,
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
The sleepers of the house? speak, speak!

Macd. O gentle lady,
'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak:
The repetition in a woman's ear,
Would murder as it fell.

Enter Banquo.

O Banquo, Banquo!
Our royal master's murder'd.

Lady M. Woe, alas!
What, in our house°?

Ban. Too cruel any where.
Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,
And say it is not so.

Re-enter Macbeth *and* Lennox, *with* Ross.

Macb. Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had lived a blessed time; for from this instant
There's nothing serious in mortality:
All is but toys: renown and grace is dead;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter Malcolm *and* Donalbain.

Don. What is amiss?

Macb. You are, and do not know't:
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd.

Macd. Your royal father's murder'd.

Mal. O, by whom?

Len. Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done't:

Their hands and faces were all badged with blood;
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found
Upon their pillows:
They stared, and were distracted; no man's life
Was to be trusted with them.
Macb. O,° yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.
Macd. Wherefore did you so?
Macb. Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:
The expedition of my violent love
Outrun° the pauser° reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin° laced with his golden blood,
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd° with gore: who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make's° love known?
Lady M. Help me hence, ho!
Macd. Look to the lady.°
Mal. [*Aside to* Don.] Why do we hold our tongues,
That most may claim this argument for ours?

Don. [*Aside to* MAL.] What should be spoken here,
where our fate,
Hid in an auger-hole,° may rush, and seize us?
Let's away;
Our tears ° are not yet brew'd.
Mal. [*Aside to* DON.] Nor our strong sorrow °
Upon the foot of motion.
Ban. Look to the lady: 131
[LADY MACBETH *is carried out.*
And when we have our naked frailties hid,°
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us:
In the great hand of God I stand, and thence
Against the undivulged pretence I fight
Of treasonous malice.°
Macd. And so do I.
All. So all.
Macb. Let's briefly put on manly readiness,°
And meet i' the hall together.
All. Well contented. 140
[*Exeunt all but* MALCOLM *and* DONALBAIN.
Mal. What will you do? Let's not consort with
them:
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office

Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

Don. To Ireland, I; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer: where we are
There's daggers ° in men's smiles: the near in blood,
The nearer bloody.

Mal. This murderous shaft ° that's shot
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore to horse;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,
But shift away: there's warrant in that theft
Which steals itself when there's no mercy left.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

Outside Macbeth's castle.

Enter Ross *with an* old Man.

Old M. Threescore and ten I can remember well:
Within the volume of which time I have seen
Hours dreadful and things strange, but this sore ° night
Hath trifled ° former knowings.°

Ross. Ah, good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,
Threaten his bloody stage: by the clock 'tis day,

And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp°:
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it°?

Old M. 'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last
A falcon towering° in her pride of place
Was by a mousing owl° hawk'd at and kill'd.

Ross. And Duncan's horses — a thing most strange and certain —
Beauteous and swift, the minions° of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.

Old M. 'Tis said they eat each other.

Ross. They did so, to the amazement of mine eyes,
That look'd upon't.

Enter Macduff.

Here comes the good Macduff.
How goes the world, sir, now?

Macd. Why, see you not?

Ross. Is't known who did this more than bloody deed?

Macd. Those that Macbeth hath slain.°

Ross. Alas, the day!
What good could they pretend?
Macd. They were suborn'd:
Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stol'n away and fled, which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.
Ross. 'Gainst nature still:
Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up°
Thine own life's means! Then 'tis most like
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.
Macd. He is already named, and gone to Scone°
To be invested.
Ross. Where is Duncan's body?
Macd. Carried to Colme-kill,°
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors
And guardian of their bones.
Ross. Will you to Scone?
Macd. No, cousin, I'll to Fife.
Ross. Well, I will thither.
Macd. Well, may you see things well done there: adieu!
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!
Ross. Farewell, father.
Old M. God's benison go with you, and with those
That would make good of bad and friends of foes!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THIRD. — Scene I.

Forres. The palace.

Enter Banquo.

Ban. Thou ° hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the weird women promised, and I fear
Thou play'dst most foully for't: yet it was said
It should not stand in thy posterity,
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them —
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine ° —
Why, by the verities on thee made good,
May they not be my oracles as well
And set me up in hope? But hush, no more.

Sennet sounded. Enter Macbeth *as king;* Lady Macbeth *as queen;* Lennox, Ross, Lords, Ladies, *and* Attendants.

Macb. Here's our chief guest.°
Lady M. If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And all-thing ° unbecoming.
Macb. To-night we hold a solemn ° supper, sir,

And I'll request your presence.

Ban. Let ° your highness
Command upon me, to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
For ever knit.

Macb. Ride you this afternoon?

Ban. Ay, my good lord.

Macb. We should have else desired your good advice,
Which still ° hath been both grave and prosperous,
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.
Is't far you ride?

Ban. As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.

Macb. Fail not our feast.

Ban. My lord, I will not.

Macb. We hear our bloody cousins are bestow'd
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention °: but of that to-morrow,
When therewithal ° we shall have cause of state
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse: adieu,
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

Ban. Ay, my good lord: our time does call upon's.

Macb. I wish your horses swift and sure of foot,
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell. [*Exit* Banquo.
Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night°; to make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper-time alone: while then,° God be with you!
[*Exeunt all but* Macbeth *and an* Attendant.
Sirrah, a word with you: attend those men
Our pleasure?

Attend. They are, my lord, without the palace-gate.

Macb. Bring them before us. [*Exit* Attendant.
To be thus is nothing°;
But to be safely thus: our fears in Banquo
Stick deep; and in this royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be fear'd: 'tis much he dares,
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear: and under him
My Genius° is rebuked, as it is said
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters,
When first they put the name of king upon me,
And bade them speak to him; then prophet-like

They hail'd him father to a line of kings:
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrench'd with ° an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I filed° my mind;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace
Only for them, and mine eternal jewel °
Given to the common enemy of man,
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
Rather than so, come, fate, into the list,
And champion me to the utterance! ° Who's there?

Re-enter Attendant, *with two* Murderers.°

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.
[*Exit* Attendant.
Was it not yesterday we spoke together?
First Mur. It was, so please your highness.
Macb. Well then, now
Have you consider'd of my speeches? Know
That it was he in the times past which held you
So under fortune, which you thought had been
Our innocent self: this I made good to you

In our last conference; pass'd in probation with you,
How you were borne in hand,° how cross'd, the instruments,
Who wrought with them, and all things else that might
To half a soul and to a notion crazed
Say "Thus did Banquo."

First Mur. You made it known to us.

Macb. I did so; and went further, which is now
Our point of second meeting. Do you find
Your patience so predominant in your nature,
That you can let this go? Are you so gospell'd,°
To pray for this good man and for his issue,
Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave
And beggar'd yours for ever?

First Mur. We are men, my liege.

Macb. Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs,° water-rugs° and demi-wolves,° are clept°
All by the name of dogs: the valued file°
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper,° the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him closed, whereby he does receive

Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike: and so of men.
Now if you have a station in the file,
Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say it,
And I will put that business in your bosoms
Whose execution takes your enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.°
Sec. Mur. I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incensed that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.
First Mur. And I another
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it or be rid on't.
Macb. Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.
Both Mur. True, my lord.
Macb. So is he mine, and in such bloody distance °
That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near'st of life: and though I could
With barefaced power sweep him from my sight
And bid my will avouch it,° yet I must not,

For certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not ° drop, but wail his fall °
Who ° I myself struck down: and thence it is
That I to your assistance do make love,
Masking the business from the common eye
For sundry weighty reasons.

Sec. Mur. We shall, my lord,
Perform what you command us.

First Mur. Though our lives —

Macb. Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour at most
I will advise you where to plant yourselves,
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,° 130
The moment on't; for't must be done to-night,
And something from ° the palace; always thought °
That I require a clearness: and with him —
To leave no rubs ° nor botches in the work —
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart:
I'll come to you anon.

Both Mur. We are resolved, my lord.

Macb. I'll call upon you straight °: abide within. 140

[*Exeunt* Murderers.

It is concluded: Banquo thy soul's flight,
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night. [*Exit.*

Scene II.

The palace.

Enter Lady Macbeth *and a* Servant.

Lady M. Is Banquo gone from court?
Serv. Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.
Lady M. Say to the king, I would attend his leisure
For a few words.
Serv. Madam, I will. [*Exit.*
Lady M. Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content:
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.°

Enter Macbeth.

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making; 9
Using ° those thoughts which should indeed have died
With them they think on? Things without all remedy
Should be without regard °: what's done is done.

Macb. We have scotch'd ° the snake, not kill'd it:
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint,° both the worlds °
suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly: better be with the dea ',°
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further.
Lady M. Come on;
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;
Be bright ° and jovial among your guests to-night.
Macb. So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you:
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo;
Present him eminence,° both with eye and tongue:
Unsafe the while,° that we
Must lave our honours in these flattering streams,
And make our faces visards ° to our hearts,
Disguising what they are.

Lady M. You must leave this.

Macb. O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

Lady M. But in them nature's copy's ° not eterne.°

Macb. There's comfort yet; they are assailable;
Then be thou jocund: ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd ° flight; ere to black Hecate's summons
The shard-borne ° beetle with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

Lady M. What's to be done?

Macb. Be innocent of the knowledge,° dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling ° night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day,
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond °
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens, and the crow
Makes wings to the rooky wood °:
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,
Whilst night's black agents ° to their preys do rouse.
Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still;
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill:
So, prithee, go with me.° [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

A park near the palace.

Enter three Murderers.

First Mur. But who did bid thee join with us?

Third Mur. Macbeth.

Sec. Mur. He needs not our mistrust; since he delivers
Our offices, and what we have to do,
To the direction just.°

First Mur. Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day:
Now spurs the lated traveller apace
To gain the timely inn, and near approaches
The subject of our watch.

Third Mur. Hark! I hear horses.

Ban. [*Within*] Give us a light there,° ho!

Sec. Mur. Then 'tis he: the rest
That are within the note of expectation
Already are i' the court.

First Mur. His horses go about.

Third Mur. Almost a mile: but he does usually —
So all men do — from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.

Sec. Mur. A light, a light!

Enter Banquo, *and* Fleance *with a torch.*

Third Mur. 'Tis he.
First Mur. Stand to't.
Ban. It will be rain to-night.
First Mur. Let it come down.
[*They set upon* Banquo.
Ban. O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
Thou mayst revenge. O slave!
[*Dies.* ° Fleance ° *escapes.*
Third Mur. Who did strike out the light?
First Mur. Was't not the way?
Third Mur. There's but one down; the son is fled.
Sec. Mur. We have lost
Best half of our affair.
First Mur. Well, let's away and say how much is done.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

Hall in the palace.

A banquet prepared. Enter Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Ross, Lennox, Lords, *and* Attendants.

Macb. You know your own degrees; sit down: at first
And last ° a hearty welcome.

Lords. Thanks to your majesty.

Macb. Ourself will mingle with society °
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her state,° but in best time,
We will require ° her welcome.

Lady M. Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends,
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

Enter first Murderer *to the door.*

Macb. See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.
Both sides are even: here I'll sit i' the midst:
Be large in mirth; anon ° we'll drink a measure
The table round. [*Approaching the door.*] There's blood upon thy face.

Mur. 'Tis Banquo's then.

Macb. 'Tis better thee without than he within.°
Is he dispatch'd° ?

Mur. My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

Macb. Thou art the best o' the cut-throats: yet he's good
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,
Thou art the nonpareil.

Mur. Most royal sir,
Fleance is 'scaped.

Macb. [*Aside*] Then comes my fit° again: I had else been perfect,
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing air:
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears. — But Banquo's safe?
Mur. Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head;
The least a death to nature.
Macb. Thanks for that.
[*Aside*] There the grown serpent lies; the worm° that's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
No teeth for the present. Get thee gone: to-morrow
We'll hear ourselves again. [*Exit* Murderer.
Lady M. My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer: the feast is sold°
That is not often vouch'd, while 'tis a-making,
'Tis given with welcome: to feed° were best at home;
From thence° the sauce to meat is ceremony;
Meeting° were bare without it.
Macb. Sweet remembrancer!
Now good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both!

Len. May't please your highness sit.

[*The Ghost of* Banquo *enters, and sits in* Macbeth's *place.*

Macb. Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,

Were the graced person of our Banquo ° present;

Who may I rather challenge for unkindness

Than pity for mischance!

Ross. His absence, sir,

Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness

To grace us with your royal company.

Macb. The table's full.°

Len. Here is a place reserved, sir.

Macb. Where?

Len. Here, my good lord. What is't that moves your highness?

Macb. Which of you have done this?

Lords. What, my good lord?

Macb. Thou canst not say I did it: never shake

Thy gory locks at me.

Ross. Gentlemen, rise; his highness is not well.

Lady M. Sit,° worthy friends: my lord is often thus,

And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat;

The fit is momentary; upon a thought
He will again be well: if much you note him,
You shall offend ° him and extend his passion:
Feed, and regard him not. Are you a man ° ?

Macb. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.

Lady M. O proper stuff ! ° 60
This is the very painting of your fear:
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. Oh, these flaws and starts,
Impostors ° to true fear, would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

Macb. Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you?
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too. 70
If charnel-houses and our graves must send
Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites. [*Exit* Ghost.

Lady M. What, quite unmann'd in folly?

Macb. If I stand here, I saw him.

Lady M. Fie, for shame!

Macb. Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time,
Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal°;
Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd
Too terrible for the ear: the time has been,
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end; but now they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools: this is more strange
Than such a murder is.

Lady M. My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

Macb. I do forget.
Do not muse° at me, my most worthy friends;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;
Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine, fill full.
I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;
Would he were here! to all and him we thirst,
And all to all.°

Lords. Our duties, and the pledge.

Re-enter Ghost.

Macb. Avaunt! and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation° in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with.
Lady M. Think of this,° good peers,
But as a thing of custom: 'tis no other;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.
Macb. What man dare, I dare:
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger°;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble: or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;
If trembling I inhabit° then, protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence! [*Exit* Ghost.
Why, so: being gone,
I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.
Lady M. You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admired disorder.
Macb. Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,

Without our special wonder? You make me strange°
Even to the disposition that I owe,
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine is blanch'd with fear.

Ross. What sights, my lord?

Lady M. I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;
Question enrages him: at once, good night:
Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once.

Len. Good night; and better health
Attend his majesty!

Lady M. A kind good night to all!

[*Exeunt all but* MACBETH *and* LADY M.

Macb. It will have blood°: they say blood will have blood:
Stones have been known to move and trees to speak;
Augures and understood relations have
By maggot-pies° and choughs and rooks brought forth
The secret'st man of blood. What is the night?

Lady M. Almost at odds with morning,° which is which.

Macb. How say'st thou, that Macduff° denies his person
At our great bidding?
Lady M. Did you send to him, sir°?
Macb. I hear it by the way, but I will send:
There's not a one of them but in his house
I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,
And betimes I will, to the weird sisters:
More shall they speak, for now I am bent to know,
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good
All causes shall give way: I am in blood
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er:
Strange things I have in head that will to hand,
Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd.
Lady M. You lack the season of all natures, sleep.°
Macb. Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse°
Is the initiate° fear that wants hard use:
We are yet but young in deed. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V.

A heath.

Thunder. Enter the three Witches, *meeting* Hecate.

First Witch. Why, how now, Hecate! ° you look angerly. °

Hec. Have I not reason, beldams ° as you are,
Saucy and over-bold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close ° contriver of all harms,
Was never call'd to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful; who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now: get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron °
Meet me i' the morning: thither he
Will come to know his destiny:
Your vessels and your spells provide,

Your charms and every thing beside.
I am for the air; this night I'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end:
Great business must be wrought ere noon:
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound°;
I'll catch it ere it come to ground:
And that distill'd by magic sleights°
Shall raise such artificial sprites
As by the strength of their illusion
Shall draw him on to his confusion:
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace and fear:
And you all know security°
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

[*Music and a song within: "Come away, come away," &c.*

Hark! I am call'd; my little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me. [*Exit.*

First Witch. Come, let's make haste; she'll soon be back again. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI.

Forres. The palace.

Enter Lennox *and another* Lord.

Len. My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret farther: only I say
Things have been strangely borne.° The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth: marry, he was dead:
And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late.
Whom, you may say, if 't please you, Fleance kill'd,
For Fleance fled: men must not walk too late.
Who cannot want the thought,° how monstrous
It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father? damned fact!° 10
How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight,
In pious rage, the two delinquents tear,
That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?
Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;
For 'twould have anger'd any man alive
To hear the men deny't. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well: and I do think

That, had he Duncan's sons under his key —
As, an't° please heaven, he shall not — they should find
What 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance.
But, peace! for from° broad words, and 'cause he fail'd
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear,
Macduff lives in disgrace: sir, can you tell
Where he bestows himself?

Lord. The son of Duncan,
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,
Lives in the English court, and is received
Of the most pious Edward with such grace
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect. Thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid
To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward:
That by the help of these, with Him above
To ratify the work, we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,
Do faithful homage and receive free honours:
All which we pine for now: and this report
Hath so exasperate the king that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

Len. Sent he to Macduff?

Lord. He did: and with an absolute "Sir,° not I," 40
The cloudy ° messenger turns me ° his back,
And hums, as who should say "You'll rue the time
That clogs me with this answer."

Len. And that well might
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England and unfold
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under a hand accursed!

Lord. I'll send my prayers with him.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT FOURTH. — Scene I.

A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron.

Thunder. *Enter the* three Witches.

First Witch. Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.
Sec. Witch. Thrice and once the hedge-pig whined.
Third Witch. Harpier ° cries "'Tis time, 'tis time."
First Witch. Round about the cauldron go:

In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty one
Swelter'd venom ° sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.
All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.
Sec. Witch. Fillet ° of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.
All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.
Third Witch. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat and slips of yew
Slivered in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,

Finger of birth-strangled babe
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab:
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our cauldron.
All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.
Sec. Witch. Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

Enter Hecate *to the other* three Witches.

Hec. O, well done! I commend your pains;
And every one shall share i' the gains:
And now about the cauldron sing,
Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.
[*Music and a song: "Black spirits,"* &c.
[*Hecate retires.*

Sec. Witch. By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes:
Open, locks,
Whoever knocks!

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is't you do?
All. A deed without a name.
Macb. I conjure you, by that which you profess,
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me:
Though you untie the winds and let them fight
Against the churches; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up;
Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure
Of nature's germins° tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken; answer me
To what I ask you.
First Witch. Speak.
Sec. Witch. Demand.
Third Witch. We'll answer.
First Witch. Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters?
Macb. Call 'em, let me see 'em.
First Witch. Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten

Her nine farrow °; grease that's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.
All. Come, high or low;
Thyself and office deftly show!

Thunder. First Apparition °: *an armed Head.*

Macb. Tell me, thou unknown power,—
First Witch. He knows thy thought:
Hear his speech, but say thou nought.
First App. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff;
Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me: enough.
[*Descends.*
Macb. Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution thanks;
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright: but one word more,—
First Witch. He will not be commanded: here's another,
More potent than the first.

Thunder. Second Apparition °: *a bloody Child.*

Sec. App. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!
Macb. Had I three ears, I'ld hear thee.

Sec. App. Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth. [*Descends.*

Macb. Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?
But yet I'll make assurance doubly sure,
And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.

Thunder. Third Apparition°: *a Child crowned, with a tree in his hand.*

What is this,
That rises like the issue of a king,
And wears upon his baby brow the round
And top of sovereignty?

All. Listen, but speak not to't.

Third App. Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him. [*Descends.*

Macb. That will never be°:
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! good!
Rebellion's head, rise never, till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art
Can tell so much: shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

All. Seek to know no more.

Macb. I will be satisfied: deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know:
Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise is this?
[Hautboys.

First Witch. Show!

Sec. Witch. Show!

Third Witch. Show!

All. Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart!

A show of eight Kings, the last with a glass in his hand; Banquo's Ghost following.

Macb. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo: down!

Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls. And thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.
A third is like the former. Filthy hags!
Why do you show me this? A fourth! Start, eyes!
What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?
Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more:
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass
Which shows me many more; and some I see
That two-fold balls ° and treble sceptres ° carry:
Horrible sight! Now I see 'tis true;
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his. What, is this so?
First Witch. Ay, sir, all this is so: but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,°
And show the best of our delights:
I'll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antic round,
That this great king may kindly say
Our duties did his welcome pay.
[*Music. The* Witches *dance and then vanish, with* Hecate.
Macb. Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour

Stand aye accursed in the calendar!
Come in,° without there!

Enter Lennox.

Len. What's your grace's will?
Macb. Saw you the weird sisters?
Len. No, my lord.
Macb. Came they not by you?
Len. No indeed, my lord.
Macb. Infected be the air whereon they ride,
And damn'd all those that trust them! I did hear
The galloping of horse: who was't come by?
Len. 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word
Macduff is fled to England.
Macb. Fled to England!
Len. Ay, my good lord.
Macb. [*Aside*] Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits:
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it: from this moment
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:

The castle of Macduff I will surprise°;
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool:
But no more sights!—Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Fife. Macduff's castle.

Enter Lady Macduff, *her* Son, *and* Ross.

L. Macd. What had he done, to make him fly the land?

Ross. You must have patience, madam.

L. Macd. He had none:
His flight was madness: when our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.°

Ross. You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

L. Macd. Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion and his titles, in a place

From whence himself does fly? He loves us not;
He wants the natural touch: for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.

Ross. My dearest coz,
I pray you, school yourself: but, for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o' the season.° I dare not speak much further:
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors
And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumour°
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way and move.° I take my leave of you:
Shall not be long but I'll be here again:
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before. My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you!

L. Macd. Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

Ross. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort:
I take my leave at once. [*Exit.*

L. Macd. Sirrah, your father's dead:
And what will you do now? How will you live?
Son. As birds do, mother.
L. Macd. What, with worms and flies?
Son. With what I get, I mean; and so do they.
L. Macd. Poor bird! thou'ldst never fear the net nor lime,
The pitfall nor the gin.
Son. Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set for.
My father is not dead, for all your saying.
L. Macd. Yes, he is dead, how wilt thou do for a father?
Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband?
L. Macd. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.
Son. Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.
L. Macd. Thou speak'st with all thy wit, and yet, i' faith,
With wit enough for thee.
Son. Was my father a traitor, mother?
L. Macd. Ay, that he was.
Son. What is a traitor?
L. Macd. Why, one that swears and lies.°
Son. And be all traitors that do so?

L. Macd. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hanged.

Son. And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

L. Macd. Every one.

Son. Who must hang them?

L. Macd. Why, the honest men.

Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools; for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang up them.

L. Macd. Now, God help thee, poor monkey!
But how wilt thou do for a father?

Son. If he were dead, you'ld weep for him: if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

L. Macd. Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,
Though in your state of honour° I am perfect.
I doubt some danger does approach you nearly:
If you will take a homely man's advice,
Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.
To fright you thus, methinks I am too savage;
To do worse° to you were fell cruelty,

Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!
I dare abide no longer. [*Exit.*

L. Macd. Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world, where to do harm
Is often laudable, to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly: why then, alas,
Do I put up that womanly defence,
To say I have done no harm? — What are these faces?

Enter Murderers.

First Mur. Where is your husband? 80

L. Macd. I hope, in no place so unsanctified
Where such as thou mayst find him.

First Mur. He's a traitor.

Son. Thou liest, thou shag-ear'd ° villain!

First Mur. What, you egg! [*Stabbing him.*

Young fry of treachery!

Son. He has kill'd me, mother:
Run away, I pray you! [*Dies.*

[*Exit* Lady Macduff, *crying* "*Murderer!*"
Exeunt Murderers, *following her.*

SCENE III.

England. Before the King's palace.

Enter MALCOLM *and* MACDUFF.

Mal. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.
Macd. Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men
Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom: each new morn
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out
Like syllable of dolour.
Mal. What I believe, I'll wail:
What know, believe; and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest: you have loved him well;
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young; but something
You may deserve ° of him through me; and wisdom °
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.

Macd. I am not treacherous.

Mal. But Macbeth is.

A good and virtuous nature may recoil °
In an imperial charge.° But I shall crave your pardon;
That which you are, my thoughts cannot transpose °:
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell:
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must still look so.

Macd. I have lost my hopes.

Mal. Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,°
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking? I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonours,
But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

Macd. Bleed, bleed, poor country:
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dare not check thee: wear thou thy wrongs;
The title is affeer'd. Fare thee well, lord:
I would not be the villain that thou think'st

For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp
And the rich East to boot.

Mal. Be not offended:
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
It weeps, it bleeds, and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds: I think withal
There would be hands uplifted in my right;
And here from gracious England have I offer
Of goodly thousands: but for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before,
More suffer and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

Macd. What should he be?

Mal. It ° is myself I mean: in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared
With my confineless harms.

Macd. Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd
In evils to top Macbeth.

Mal. I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name: but there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness: your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons, and your maids, could not fill up
The cistern of my lust, and my desire
All continent impediments would o'erbear,
That did oppose my will: better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign.

Macd. Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy throne,
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours: you may
Convey ° your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink:
We have willing dames enough; there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclined.

Mal. With this there grows
In my most ill-composed affection such
A stanchless avarice that, were I king,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,

Desire his jewels and this other's house:
And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more, that I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.

Macd. This avarice
Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
Than summer-seeming° lust, and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings: yet do not fear;
Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will
Of your mere own: all these are portable,
With other graces weigh'd.

Mal. But I have none: the king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no relish of them, but abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar° the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.

Macd. O Scotland, Scotland!

Mal. If such a one be fit to govern, speak:
I am as I have spoken.

Macd. Fit to govern!
No, not to live. O nation miserable!
With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction stands accursed,
And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king: the queen that bore thee,
Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
Died° every day she lived. Fare thee well!
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!
Mal. Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, hath from my soul
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts
To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains hath sought to win me
Into his power; and modest wisdom plucks me
From over-credulous haste: but God above
Deal between thee and me! for even now
I put myself to thy direction, and
Unspeak mine own detraction; here abjure
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
For strangers to my nature. I am yet

Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,
At no time broke my faith, would not betray
The devil to his fellow, and delight
No less in truth than life: my first false speaking
Was this upon myself: what I am truly,
Is thine and my poor country's to command:
Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,
Already at a point, was setting forth.
Now we'll together, and the chance of goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you silent?

Macd. Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
'Tis hard to reconcile.

Enter a Doctor.

Mal. Well, more anon. Comes the king forth, I pray you?

Doct. Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls
That stay his cure: their malady convinces
The great assay of art; but at his touch,°
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand,
They presently amend.

Mal. I thank you, doctor. [*Exit* Doctor.

Macd. What's the disease he means?

Mal. 'Tis call'd the evil:
A most miraculous work in this good king;
Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
Himself best knows: but strangely-visited people,
All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery, he cures,
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
Put on with holy prayers: and 'tis spoken,
To the succeeding royalty he leaves
The healing benediction. With this strange virtue
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
And sundry blessings hang about his throne
That speak him full of grace.

Enter Ross.

Macd. See, who comes here?
Mal. My countryman; but yet I know him not.
Macd. My ever gentle cousin, welcome hither.
Mal. I know him now: good God, betimes remove
The means that makes us strangers!
Ross. Sir, amen.
Macd. Stands Scotland where it did?
Ross. Alas, poor country!
Almost afraid to know itself! It cannot
Be call'd our mother, but our grave: where nothing,

But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air,
Are made, not mark'd; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy: the dead man's knell
Is there scarce ask'd for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.

Macd. O, relation
Too nice, and yet too true!

Mal. What's the newest grief?

Ross. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker;
Each minute teems a new one.

Macd. How does my wife?

Ross. Why, well.°

Macd. And all my children?

Ross. Well too.

Macd. The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace?

Ross. No; they were well at peace when I did leave 'em.

Macd. Be not a niggard of your speech: how goes't?

Ross. When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour
Of many worthy fellows that were out;
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,

For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot:
Now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.
Mal. Be't their comfort
We are coming thither: gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men;
An older and a better soldier none
That Christendom gives out.
Ross. Would I could answer
This comfort with the like! But I have words
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch them.
Macd. What concern they?
The general cause? or is it a fee-grief
Due to some single breast?
Ross. No mind that's honest
But in it shares some woe, though the main part
Pertains to you alone.
Macd. If it be mine,
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it.
Ross. Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound
That ever yet they heard.
Macd. Hum! I guess at it.

Ross. Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes
Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,
To add the death of you.
Mal. Merciful heaven!
What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'erfraught heart, and bids it break.
Macd. My children too?
Ross. Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.
Macd. And I must be from thence!
My wife kill'd too?
Ross. I have said.
Mal. Be comforted:
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.
Macd. He has no children.° All my pretty ones?
Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?
Mal. Dispute it like a man.
Macd. I shall do so°;
But I must also feel it as a man:
I cannot but remember such things were,

That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! naught° that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls: heaven rest them now!

Mal. Be this the whetstone of your sword: let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

Macd. O, I could play the woman with mine eyes,
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission; front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too!

Mal. This tune goes manly.
Come, go we to the king; our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave. Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments.° Receive what cheer you may;
The night is long that never finds the day.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT FIFTH. — Scene I.

Dunsinane. Ante-room in the castle.

Enter a Doctor of Physic *and a* Waiting-Gentlewoman.

Doct. I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

Gent. Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper,° fold it, write upon't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

Doct. A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep and do the effects of watching! In this slumbery agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what at any time, have you heard her say?

Gent. That, sir, which I will not report after her.

Doct. You may to me, and 'tis most meet you should.

Gent. Neither to you nor any one, having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter Lady Macbeth, *with a taper.*

Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise, and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close.

Doct. How came she by that light?

Gent. Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 'tis her command.°

Doct. You see, her eyes are open.

Gent. Ay, but their sense is shut.

Doct. What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

Gent. It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands°: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

Lady M. Yet here's a spot.

Doct. Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

Lady M. Out, damned spot! out, I say! One: two: why, then 'tis time to do't. — Hell is murky! — Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? — Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

Doct. Do you mark that?

Lady M. The thane of Fife had a wife; where is she now°? — What, will these hands ne'er be clean? — No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting.

Doct. Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

Gent. She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: heaven knows what she has known.

Lady M. Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

Doct. What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

Gent. I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

Doct. Well, well, well, —

Gent. Pray God it be, sir.

Doct. This disease is beyond my practice: yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

Lady M. Wash your hands; put on your night-gown; look not so pale: I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried°; he cannot come out on 's grave.

Doct. Even so°?

Lady M. To bed, to bed; there's knocking at the

gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand: what's done cannot be undone: to bed, to bed, to bed. [*Exit.*

Doct. Will she go now to bed?

Gent. Directly.

Doct. Foul whisperings are abroad: unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets:
More needs she the divine than the physician.
God, God forgive us all! Look after her;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,
And still keep eyes upon her. So good night:
My mind she has mated and amazed my sight:
I think, but dare not speak.

Gent. Good night, good doctor.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

The country near Dunsinane.

Drum and colours. Enter Menteith, Caithness, Angus, Lennox, *and* Soldiers.

Ment. The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward and the good Macduff:
Revenges burn in them; for their dear causes

Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm
Excite the mortified man.°

Ang. Near Birnam wood
Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.

Caith. Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

Len. For certain, sir, he is not: I have a file
Of all the gentry: there is Siward's son,
And many unrough youths, that even now
Protest their first of manhood.

Ment. What does the tyrant?

Caith. Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:
Some say he's mad; others, that lesser hate him,
Do call it valiant fury: but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause°
Within the belt of rule.

Ang. Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Now minutely° revolts upbraid his faith-breach;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love: now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

Ment. Who then shall blame
His pester'd senses to recoil and start,

When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there?

Caith. Well, march we on,
To give obedience where 'tis truly owed:
Meet we the medicine ° of the sickly weal,
And with him pour we, in our country's purge,
Each drop of us.

Len. Or so much as it needs
To dew the sovereign ° flower and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam.

[*Exeunt, marching.*

Scene III.

Dunsinane. A room in the castle.

Enter Macbeth, Doctor, *and* Attendants.

Macb. Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane
I cannot taint with fear.° What's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus:
"Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false thanes,

And mingle with the English epicures:
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

Enter a Servant.

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!
Where got'st thou that goose look?
Serv. There is ten thousand —
Macb. Geese, villain?
Serv. Soldiers, sir.
Macb. Go prick thy face and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch? °
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?
Serv. The English force, so please you.
Macb. Take thy face hence. [*Exit* Servant.
Seyton! ° — I am sick at heart,
When I behold — Seyton, I say! — This push
Will cheer ° me ever, or disseat me now.
I have lived long enough: my way of life °
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf,
And that which should accompany old ° age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath,

Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.
Seyton!

Enter SEYTON.

Sey. What's your gracious pleasure?
Macb. What news more?
Sey. All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.
Macb. I'll fight, till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.
Give me my armour.
Sey. 'Tis not needed yet.
Macb. I'll put it on.
Send out moe horses, skirr the country round;
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armour.
How does your patient, doctor?
Doct. Not so sick, my lord,
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,
That keep her from her rest.
Macb. Cure her of that.
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,°
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

Doct. Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.

Macb. Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it.
Come, put mine armour on: give me my staff.
Seyton, send out.° Doctor, the thanes fly from me.
Come, sir, dispatch. If thou couldst, doctor, cast
The water of my land, find her disease
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again. Pull't off, I say.
What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,
Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of them?

Doct. Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.

Macb. Bring it after me.
I will not be afraid of death and bane
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane.

Doct. [*Aside*] Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

Country near Birnam wood.

Drum and colours. Enter Malcolm, old Siward *and his* Son, Macduff, Menteith, Caithness, Angus, Lennox, Ross, *and* Soldiers, *marching.*

Mal. Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That chambers will be safe.°
Ment. We doubt it nothing.
Siw. What wood is this before us?
Ment. The wood of Birnam.°
Mal. Let every soldier hew him down a bough,
And bear't before him: thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host, and make discovery
Err in report of us.
Soldiers. It shall be done.
Siw. We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
Our setting down before't.
Mal. 'Tis his main hope:
For where there is advantage to be given,°
Both more and less have given him the revolt,
And none serve with him but constrained things
Whose hearts are absent too.

Macd. Let our just censures
Attend the true event,° and put we on
Industrious soldiership.
Siw. The time approaches,
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have and what we owe.
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate:
Towards which advance the war. [*Exeunt, marching.*

Scene V.

Dunsinane. Within the castle.

Enter Macbeth, Seyton, *and* Soldiers, *with drum and colours.*

Macb. Hang out our banners on the outward walls;
The cry is still "They come": our castle's strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn: here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up:
Were they not forced ° with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home.
[*A cry of women within.*
What is that noise?

Sey. It is the cry of women, my good lord. [*Exit.*

Macb. I have almost forgot the taste of fears:
The time has been, my senses would have cool'd
To hear a night-shriek, and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir
As life were in't: I have supp'd full with horrors;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.

Re-enter SEYTON.

Wherefore was that cry?

Sey. The queen, my lord, is dead.

Macb. She should have died hereafter°;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle°!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Enter a Messenger.

Thou comest to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.

Mess. Gracious my lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.

Macb. Well, say, sir.

Mess. As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.

Macb. Liar and slave!

Mess. Let me endure your wrath, if 't be not so:
Within this three mile may you see it coming;
I say, a moving grove.

Macb. If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling ° thee: if thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much.
I pull in resolution, and begin
To doubt the equivocation of the fiend
That lies like truth: "Fear not, till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane;" and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out!
If this which he avouches does appear,
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.
I 'gin to be a-weary of the sun,

And wish the estate o' the world were now undone.
Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack!
At least we'll die with harness on our back. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI.

Dunsinane. Before the castle.

Drum and colours. Enter Malcolm, old Siward, Macduff, *and their* Army, *with boughs.*

Mal. Now near enough; your leavy screens throw down,
And show like those you are. You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right noble son,
Lead our first battle: worthy Macduff and we
Shall take upon 's what else remains to do,
According to our order.
Siw. Fare you well.
Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.
Macd. Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII.

Another part of the field.

Alarums. Enter Macbeth.

Macb. They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,
But bear-like I must fight the course. What's he
That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

Enter young Siward.

Yo. Siw. What is thy name?
Macb. Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.
Yo. Siw. No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.
Macb. My name's Macbeth.
Yo. Siw. The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.
Macb. No, nor more fearful.
Yo. Siw. Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword
I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

[*They fight, and* young Siward *is slain.*

Macb. Thou wast born of woman.
But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandish'd by man that's of a woman born. [*Exit.*

Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face!
If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms
Are hired to bear their staves: either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword, with an unbatter'd edge,
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst be;
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited: let me find him, fortune!
And more I beg not. [*Exit. Alarums.*

Enter MALCOLM *and* old SIWARD.

Siw. This way, my lord; the castle's gently render'd:
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight;
The noble thanes do bravely in the war;
The day almost itself professes yours,
And little is to do.

Mal. We have met with foes
That strike beside us.
Siw. Enter, sir, the castle.
[*Exeunt.* *Alarum.*

SCENE VIII.

Another part of the field.

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. Why should I play the Roman fool, and die
On mine own sword? whiles I see lives, the gashes
Do better upon them.

Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. Turn, hell-hound, turn!
Macb. Of all men else I have avoided thee:
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.
Macd. I have no words:
My voice is in my sword, thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out! [*They fight.*
Macb. Thou losest labour:
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed: 10

Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.

Macd. Despair thy charm,
And let the angel whom thou still hast served
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripp'd.

Macb. Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cow'd my better part of man!
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That palter with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.

Macd. Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time:
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
"Here may you see the tyrant."

Macb. I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last: before my body
I throw my warlike shield: lay on, Macduff;

And damn'd be him that first cries "Hold, enough!"
[*Exeunt,° fighting. Alarums.*

Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colours, Malcolm, old Siward, Ross, *the other* Thanes, *and* Soldiers.

Mal. I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.
Siw. Some must go off: and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.
Mal. Macduff is missing, and your noble son.
Ross. Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt:
He only lived but till he was a man;
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.
Siw. Then he is dead?
Ross. Ay, and brought off the field: your cause of sorrow
Must not be measured by his worth, for then
It hath no end.
Siw. Had he his hurts before?
Ross. Ay, on the front.
Siw. Why then, God's soldier be he!
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,

I would not wish them to a fairer death:
And so his knell is knoll'd.

Mal. He's worth more sorrow,
And that I'll spend for him.

Siw. He's worth no more:
They say he parted well and paid his score:
And so God be with him! Here comes newer comfort.

Re-enter Macduff *with* Macbeth's *head.*

Macd. Hail, king! for so thou art: behold where stands
The usurper's cursed head: the time is free:
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,
That speak my salutation in their minds;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine:
Hail, King of Scotland!

All. Hail, King of Scotland!

[*Flourish.*

Mal. We shall not spend a large expense of time
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland
In such an honour named. What's more to do,

Which would be planted newly with the time,
As calling home our exiled friends abroad
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny,
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life; this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace
We will perform in measure, time and place:
So thanks to all at once and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt.*

NOTES

Act I, Scene I

This first scene forms a remarkable introduction to the play. The barren and desolate heath, the dark thunder-clouds, the approaching storm, and above all the weird, misshapen forms of the witches, now concealed and now revealed by the eddying mists, all combine to excite intense, almost breathless interest in the man for whose weal or woe all these phenomena have been called into existence. The way in which these striking scene-effects serve to concentrate the attention of the audience upon the hero, as yet unseen and unknown, is an illustration of the marvellous art of the author. The scene is short. There is no description of, and only a single reference to Macbeth, yet through all the weird horrors of the setting his personality is the one absorbing feature.

Here is a man in the grasp of supernatural powers. For him these uncanny beings have summoned the storm, and are obviously about to exercise their hellish arts. Evidently great issues centre around this unknown hero, and his advent into the action of the play is eagerly awaited.

l. 2. **or in rain.** The question is not whether they should meet in "thunder, lightning, or in rain," but when they should meet. Would not the meaning be stronger if *and* were substituted for *or?* In some editions this change has been made.

l. 3. **hurley-burley** is of somewhat doubtful origin. It may be derived from the French *hurlu-burlu*, and it may have been formed by onomatopœia as suggested by Henderson. It means an uproar or tumult, and here refers to the battle.

l. 3. A battle was even then in progress between the Scottish forces led by Macbeth and Banquo and the army of the Norwegian king.

l. 11. This passage shows the inverted moral sense of the witches. Their natures were so depraved that they found their happiness in evil, and chose the darkness rather than the day for their deeds.

Scene II

The characters of Duncan and Malcolm were introduced here as foils to that of Macbeth. At this time bravery was considered the highest virtue. Yet both the king and the prince remain tamely in camp while a battle is being fought with an invading enemy and the fate of the kingdom is trembling in the balance. Macbeth is commanding the Scottish forces in the midst of the conflict, where Duncan should have been. Malcolm has shown more bravery than his father, for he has at least been in the fight, but after barely escaping capture has fled to his tent and left the battle-field while the result was still uncertain. Even the sergeant appears more worthy than this royal pair, for he has not only fought and received honorable wounds, but he has been instrumental in saving the prince from capture. By contrast the character of Macbeth shines most brilliantly. The sergeant garrulously descants upon his bravery, and the calm and evidently envious Ross bears reluctant witness to his success while announcing the victory. At once the thought forces itself upon the audience: "Here is a king who is unworthy of

his high position, no matter how gentle and virtuous he may be. Does not Macbeth possess the true qualifications for the kingly office?"

l. 1. **bloody.** "This word reappears on almost every page and runs like a red thread through the whole piece; in no other of Shakespeare's dramas is it so frequent." — BODENSTADT.

l. 2. **The latest news of the revolt.** While this war was directed against a foreign prince, at least one of the king's vassals had joined the invader.

l. 3. **sergeant.** Holinshed says that the king sent a *sergeant-at-arms* to bring up the chief offenders to answer the charges made against them, but they misused and slew the messenger. Shakespeare took the name from Holinshed, and ignored the rest of the story. *Sergeant* is derived from the French *sergent*, which in turn comes from the Latin *serviens*, which originally meant a common foot-soldier.

l. 9. By clinging together they prevent each other from exercising their art.

l. 10. **for to that** = to that end.

l. 13. **Kerns.** A name given in Ireland to light-armed soldiers, in distinction from "gallowglasses" or heavy-armed soldiers. Notice the use of *of*.

l. 15. **Showed.** The meaning is that although Fortune smiled upon him, she yet deceived him.

l. 17. **Disdaining Fortune.** Since Fortune seemed to smile upon the rebel, Macbeth disdained her and conquered as valor's minion.

l. 23. Would not this scene have been more powerful and

realistic if the deeds described had been performed upon the stage within sight of the audience?

Observe that this course would have left no room for the play of imagination, whereas now fancy is unchecked.

ll. 25–28. As from the sky comes the health-giving radiance of the sun and the death-dealing storms, so discomfort comes from the same spring whence comfort comes.

l. 31. Looking for a favorable opportunity.

l. 32. **Furbished**. Polished, hence unused, fresh.

l. 35. Notice that although nothing has been previously said about Banquo, the king is unwilling to give all the honor to Macbeth.

l. 36. As a substantive **sooth** means truth.

l. 37. What figure of speech is this where the word **crack** is used for the load which produces the crack or report?

l. 40. "To make this place as memorable as another Golgotha."

l. 41. The sergeant's eagerness to sing Macbeth's praises has made him forget his own wounds. Again the thought is forced upon the audience, "How great and worthy a man is this Macbeth to inspire such enthusiasm in a subordinate!"

l. 45. **thane** is from the Anglo-Saxon, and means literally a servant. It came to mean the king's servant, and is defined as "an Anglo-Saxon nobleman, inferior in rank to an earl and ealdorman."

l. 46. **seems** may be taken in the sense of *appears*, although **it** has been suggested that it is a misprint for *comes*.

l. 49. One critic says: "The meaning seems to be, not that

the Norwegian banners proudly insulted the sky, but that, the standards being taken by Duncan's forces and fixed in the ground, the colors idly flapped about, serving only to cool the conqueror instead of being proudly displayed by their former owners."

Another says: "The Norwegian banners flout or insult the sky, while raised in the pride of expected victory. **and fan**, etc., is metaphorically used for *chill them with apprehension.*"

Which is the better interpretation?

l. 54. **Bellona** was an old Roman goddess of war, the sister and wife of Mars. "Bellona's bridegroom" is undoubtedly used to refer to Macbeth.

Proof here means proof-armor.

l. 55. That is, met him on an equality, with equal arms and equal valor.

l. 59. **Composition.** Terms of peace. How does the derivation make this meaning *possible?*

l. 61. **Inch,** an island. From Gaelic *Innis* or *Ennis.*

> "To inch and rock the sea-mews fly."
> — Scott, *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, VI., 24.

Colme's inch is a small island in the Frith of Edinburgh with an abbey upon it dedicated to St. Colomb.

l. 62. **dollars.** Is not this an anachronism? When were dollars first coined?

Scene III

A careful study of this scene will disclose the weird sisters in two entirely distinct phases of character. Before Macbeth and Banquo enter, they appear as vulgar and cruel creatures,

merely the commonplace witches of the everyday superstition of the period. But when the hero of the play enters, they throw aside their vulgarity, and assume a certain dignity as evil spirits who have the power, if not actually to control future events, at least to foresee and foretell them. The transformation is a notable one, and many different explanations have been given. One class of critics contends that the first part of the scene is an interpolation, and that Shakespeare is responsible only for the latter part. While there is undoubtedly evidence to support this view, another explanation seems more reasonable. Shakespeare is representing a man of noble impulses and exalted character struggling with temptation and finally yielding to it. The moral principles involved and illustrated are exceedingly impressive. The horror and degradation of sin are shown with a master hand. Now sin is not only evil and degrading, but it is utterly subversive of all nobility and refinement of character. The weird sisters exemplify to a considerable extent the evil influences which are exerted upon Macbeth. If they had appeared only as prophetic spirits, no matter how evil and perverted, the crime would not have been revealed in all its hideous aspects. Was it not, then, a stroke of genius to introduce this apparently discordant scene, by which the vulgarity and repulsiveness, which are essential elements as well as results of sin, are clearly brought out?

Observe that whenever the witches appear they are accompanied by convulsions and portents of nature. Is this significant?

l. 6. **Aroint thee.** *Aroint* is a word of doubtful origin. It seems to have been a standard formula for exorcising witches and meant "Avaunt thee! begone!"

rump-fed ronyon is a term of low reproach. Its most savory

meaning would be an ill-bred, unkempt woman who is compelled to feed upon offal and leavings.

l. 7. **Aleppo.** In Hakluyt's *Voyages* there is an account of a ship *Tiger* which made a voyage to Aleppo in 1583.

l. 8. **Sieve.** It was believed that witches could sail in egg-shells or sieves even on tempestuous seas.

l. 9. **tail.** It was believed that, although a witch could assume the form of any animal she chose, the tail must always be wanting.

l. 10. She threatens in the form of a rat to gnaw through the hull of the *Tiger* and cause her to spring a leak.

l. 11. Witches were supposed to be able to sell winds. In *Summer's Last Will and Testament*, 1600, occurs the following passage:

> "——— in Ireland and in Denmark both,
> Witches for gold will sell a man a wind,
> Which in the corner of a napkin wrapped,
> Shall blow him safe unto what coast he will."

l. 15. **ports.** Some editors read *points*. Which is preferable?

l. 17. **Shipman's card.** The reference is to the *sea-chart*, or possibly to the card under the compass on which the different points of the compass are shown.

l. 20. Some commentators say the eyebrow is meant here, and others the eyelid. Is there anything in the text which may decide the question?

l. 21. **forbid**, under a curse or bewitched.

l. 32. **The weird sisters.** Max Müller says:

"Weird meant originally the Past. It was the name given to the first of the three Norns, the German Parcæ (Fates). . . . *The Weird Sisters* were intended either as destiny personified, or as faticidæ, prophesying what is to befall man. Shakespeare retains the Saxon name."

The expression is used by Holinshed, from whom Shakespeare probably borrowed it. Some commentators claim that *weird* is better read wayward, but the weight of authority seems to be against this change.

l. 36. "They take hold of hands and dance around a ring nine times, three rounds for each witch." Multiples of three and nine were specially affected by witches ancient and modern.

l. 38. At last Macbeth appears and startles the audience by repeating substantially a remark that has already been heard from the lips of the witches. He may have referred to the fierceness of the battle and the glory of the victory, or to the day which, under the influence of the witches, had changed suddenly from "fair" to "foul," and it is probable that his remark has no further significance. Yet the thought comes that the influence of the weird sisters has already been exerted upon him and that a subtle connection has been established between them.

l. 48. The witches have no answer for Banquo, who first addresses them, but Macbeth wins an instantaneous recognition.

l. 50. This was an astounding prediction. Is there any present evidence that the idea was not a new one to Macbeth? Does Banquo's exclamation contain any hint of what is going

on in Macbeth's mind? Observe if any subsequent passages throw light upon this question.

l. 52. Here Banquo turns and again addresses the witches.

l. 55. **Present grace** refers to the dignity of Thane of Glamis which he has already attained; the **great prediction of noble having** refers to the Thane of Cawdor; while the prospect of royal power was the **royal hope.**

l. 57. The first folio has **wrapt** instead of **rapt.** Which is the stronger word in this connection?

l. 61. Notice how differently the two men receive the predictions of the witches. Macbeth is evidently deeply affected. A responsive chord has been touched in his heart, while Banquo seems moved by mere curiosity.

l. 65. What explanation may be given of these apparently contradictory passages?

l. 67. French in his *Shakespeareana Genealogica*, p. 291, has the following:

"Banquo and Fleance, though named by Holinshed, followed by Shakespeare, are now considered by the best authors to be altogether fictitious personages. Chalmers says, 'History knows nothing of Banquo, the Thane of Lochaber, nor of Fleance, his son.' Sir Walter Scott observes that 'early authorities show no such personages as Banquo and his son Fleance. . . . Neither were Banquo and his son ancestors of the House of Stuart.' Yet modern Peerages and Genealogical Charts still retain the names of Banquo and Fleance in the pedigree of the Royal Houses of Scotland and England."

l. 71. **Macbeth** was the son of Sinel, Thane of Glamis.

l. 72. Notice the insincerity. Macbeth has met Cawdor in battle and knew him to be a traitor. See Scene II., l. 53.

l. 76. The word **owe** comes from the Anglo-Saxon *agan* which means to have or possess.

l. 81. **corporal.** Should not this be corporeal? Study the meanings of the two words and decide.

l. 84. **insane root.** It is difficult to determine what root is referred to here. Such plants as the deadly nightshade, henbane, hyoscyamus, and hemlock have been designated by different commentators.

Plutarch, in his *Life of Antony*, says that "the Roman soldiers were compelled through want of provisions in the Parthian war, to taste of roots that were never eaten before; among the which there was one that killed them, and made them out of their wits, for he that had once eaten of it, his memory was gone from him, and he knew no manner of thing, but only busied himself in digging and hurling stones from one place to another."

l. 93. This passage is somewhat obscure.

Halliwell interprets it as follows: "That is, — the king's wonder and commendation of your deeds are so nearly balanced, they contend whether the latter should be preëminently thine, or the wonder remain with him to the exclusion of any other thought."

Clarendon[1] says: "There is a conflict in the king's mind between his astonishment at the achievement and his admiration of the achiever; he knows not how sufficiently to express his own wonder and to praise Macbeth, so that he is reduced to silence."

[1] The references here and elsewhere, for brevity entered as Clarendon, are to the Clarendon Press edition, edited by Clark and Wright.

l. 97. The sense is "you were not at all afraid of the death which you yourself were dealing to the enemy."

l. 112. The verb **line** has an occasional meaning of to *strengthen with new works.*

l. 120. **home** here means *to the full extent.*

l. 120. Does this passage indicate that Banquo had fathomed Macbeth's growing purpose and desired to warn him against it?

l. 134. Evidently the suggestion that he murder the king.

l. 136. Rowe says: "The hair may be uplifted but no horrid image can unfix it."

l. 139. Fancied.

l. 140. **function** refers to natural activity. He means to say that the ordinary activities of his mind are overshadowed by his imagination and that his fancies have taken the place of the facts by which he is surrounded. For the time he lives in an unreal world which fancy, incited by his ambition, has conjured up.

l. 151. This is a second evidence of insincerity, which shows that the evil leaven is working.

Scene IV

Notice that hitherto the king has appeared in an unfavorable light in comparison with Macbeth, but now the true nobility and gentleness of his nature are revealed, while Macbeth's cruel ambition and treachery continue to debase his character. Observe how the contrast heightens as the play moves on.

l. 9. Well qualified by study. Possibly an allusion is intended to the deaths of Socrates and Seneca.

l. 11. Can this passive use of the adjective **careless** be justified? It is to be understood here in the sense of *not cared for*.

l. 15. Duncan's reflections on Cawdor are interrupted by the entrance of a man whose face, like that of the traitorous earl, masked the deep designs of his heart. All that Duncan said about Cawdor he could say with equal truth about Macbeth.

l. 18. **proportion**, that is, the due proportion between Macbeth's deserts and Duncan's thanks and payment.

l. 20. **mine**. One editor reads *more* instead of *mine*. Another surmises that Shakespeare wrote *mean*, in the sense of equal or just. Study the text carefully and determine which of these readings is preferable.

l. 21. More is thy due than more than all I can say or do will pay.

l. 22. Observe the frank sincerity and hearty generosity of Duncan's greeting, and then the hypocrisy and labored rhetoric of Macbeth's response. What insight do you thus get into the character of each?

l. 22. The loyal service which I owe repays itself in its performance. Why is the verb **pays** in the singular?

l. 26. **Safe toward.** This expression has been variously interpreted. Seymour says: "with sure tendency." Singer says: "*Safe* may mean merely respectful, loyal." Knight says: "Surely it is easier to receive the words in their plain acceptation — our duties are called upon to do everything which they can do *safely*, as regards the honor and love we bear you." Elwin says: "The meaning is, who do what they should, by doing everything that can be done, which secures to you the

love and honor that is your due." Clarendon says: "*Safe* is used provincially for *sure, certain.*"

Safe is sometimes used in the sense of conferring safety, *e.g.* a safe guide. May the passage be interpreted as follows: "By doing everything which shall render your love and honor safe and secure"?

l. 29. **growing** was formerly used of accruing wealth and power.

l. 29. Mark the difference in his greetings of Macbeth and Banquo. What does this indicate in regard to his feelings towards them? Also observe that he gives Banquo equal honor with Macbeth.

l. 35. His joys are so abundant that they find expression in tears.

l. 38. Is there any significance in the unusual time and manner of this announcement? Is it possible that the king had begun to suspect Macbeth's ambition and desired to show him its futility? At any rate the announcement of the succession must bring matters to a crisis in the mind of Macbeth. He must now make his choice between loyalty and treason.

l. 39. **Prince of Cumberland.** "The crown of Scotland was originally not hereditary. When a successor was declared in the lifetime of a king (as was often the case), the title of Prince of Cumberland was immediately bestowed on him as the mark of his designation. Cumberland was at that time held by Scotland of England as a fief." — Steevens.

l. 43. **to you**; to Macbeth.

l. 44. **The rest.** In the first folio *rest* is printed with a capital, which leaves no doubt of its meaning.

l. 50. **For in my way it lies.** How does this step of the king lie in his way? What two lines of action, only, lie open to him now?

Stars, hide your fires. As this scene is evidently not laid in the night, why does he utter this apostrophe to the stars?

l. 54. **True.** While Macbeth is uttering the lines which precede, Duncan and Banquo are evidently conferring apart in regard to Macbeth and Duncan's speech is in response to some commendation bestowed upon him by Banquo.

l. 58. **It is a peerless kinsman.** One editor reads *He* in place of *It*. Duncan is evidently speaking of Macbeth with warm affection. With this in mind, which form of expression would best suit his purpose?

Scene V

This scene begins to reveal the ascendency which Lady Macbeth wields over her husband. She has made up her mind that he shall be king, and the opportunity is at hand. Her powerful character-sketch of her husband should be carefully studied, for it not only reveals his nature but sheds light upon her own.

l. 22. The illness referred to is moral. Righteousness is only a state of moral health, while sin is a disease.

l. 29. **golden round** of course refers to the crown.

l. 30. **metaphysical** in Shakespeare's time seems to have had no other meaning than supernatural.

l. 31. **seem To have thee crowned withal.** Would it be easier to interpret this passage if *aim* were substituted for *seem*? One editor changes the order so as to make it read "seem To have crowned thee withal." Is this a better rendering?

l. 39. **The raven himself is hoarse**, etc. Some commentators make this a direct reference to the messenger who is so spent with his haste that he can hardly breathe to deliver his message. Is it not better to give it the simple meaning which the text seems to imply ?

l. 40. This magnificent invocation to the spirits of evil is one of the finest things of the kind in all literature. It should be carefully studied.

l. 41. **mortal** in sense of deadly.

l. 46. In what sense may **compunctious visitings of nature** be said to keep peace between her purpose and its effect or fulfilment ?

l. 50. **Sightless** seems to mean something more than invisible ; perhaps it may imply, *too horrible to be looked upon.*

l. 55. Compare this soliloquy with Macbeth's in the preceding scene.

l. 57. **hereafter.** Mrs. Jameson says : "This is surely the very rapture of ambition ! and those who have heard Mrs. Siddons pronounce the word *hereafter*, cannot forget the look, the tone, which seemed to give her auditors a glimpse of that awful future, which she, in her prophetic fury, beholds upon the instant.

l. 58. **ignorant.** Johnson says *ignorant* is used in the sense of *unknowing*. Delius thinks it should be taken to mean *obscure.*

l. 62. Lady Macbeth's ambition for her husband has taken entire possession of her. It overshadows every consideration of friendship, hospitality, and humanity. Entirely regardless of consequences, she has yielded herself wholly to this unholy purpose.

l. 72. Her present resolution and daring cannot be understood until it is compared with the weakness and remorse with which she is afterwards visited. The present moment is not one of calm purpose but of madness. The spirits which she has invoked have indeed taken possession of her. When the deed is done and conscience seeks to exorcise them it is too late.

l. 74. All she asks is that he shall keep up appearances. She is ready to do the rest. To such a height of resolution does her present madness carry her.

Scene VI

In this scene the king and his demon-inspired hostess are brought together. The opening passage, dwelling upon the peace and quietness of the surroundings, serves to heighten the horror of the deed which is about to be performed in their midst. It sometimes happens that where nature smiles the sweetest there human passions are the bitterest.

The contrast between Duncan and Lady Macbeth as illustrated in this scene should be carefully studied. He overflows with genuine good-will, while her heart is full of hatred towards him, and already she has determined to murder him. Her overwrought feelings and her desire to avoid suspicion betray themselves to us in her strained and empty greetings.

Is it not a significant fact that Macbeth does not appear to welcome his guest?

l. 2. **nimbly.** The expression *brisk air* is frequently used.

l. 3. **gentle senses** is used in the sense of *placid feelings.*

l. 4. **temple-haunting.** Is this a chance epithet, or does it show an exact knowledge of natural history on the part of Shakespeare?

l. 5. Pope reads *masonry* instead of *mansionry*.

l. 6. **jutty**. Several editors would omit the comma, and make *jutty* an adjective to agree with frieze. Will the nature of the frieze admit of this construction? It is probably better to read *jetty*, from which the modern word is obtained. It is applied to the part of the house which projects under the eaves.

l. 13. **Yield**, sometimes used by Shakespeare and contemporaries in the sense "to give a reward to." Cf.

> "Send me to-night two hours, I ask no more,
> And the gods yield you for't."
> — *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV., 2.

l. 14. This passage may be read as follows:

"The love that our friends bear for us sometimes causes us trouble, for which still we are thankful as an evidence of that love. Thus I teach you how you shall bid God reward us for your pains and thank us for your troubles, for are they not evidence of our love?"

l. 19. That is, persons whose lives are devoted to prayer for you.

l. 27. It was the old feudal idea that all the land belonged to the king, and that all the landowners, with their families and servants, were his dependants. Lady Macbeth, perhaps unconsciously, uses an old feudal formula to show how fully she holds herself and all that she has at the king's service.

l. 31. Here Duncan gives his hand to Lady Macbeth and leads her into the castle.

SCENE VII

This scene should be very carefully studied, not only for its dramatic interest, but also for the further light it sheds upon

the two leading characters of the play. It is an evidence of Shakespeare's genius that, notwithstanding the horror which his purpose inspires, the sympathies of the audience are still with Macbeth. Should he now determine to give up his purpose the audience would turn from him in disappointment and unhesitatingly dub him a coward. It would be a profitable task to carefully study this whole act to ascertain how the author brings such an apparently impossible result to pass.

Sewer: an officer who served up a feast.

> "Their task the busy sewers ply
> And all is mirth and revelry."
> — Scott, *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, VI., 6.

l. 1. If the doing of the murder were all that was necessary to carry out his purpose, then it were well it were done quickly. But there are consequences.

The following interesting discussion of these two lines appeared in the *Boston Courier*, April 25, 1857, and are quoted in Furness' *Variorum Macbeth*, p. 441:

"A few words on the first two lines of it. Strange as it may seem, this masterly production of the foremost man in the dramatic literature of the world used to be censured for 'perplexity of thought and expression.' On the contrary, one of the wonders of the piece is the firmness with which a simple train of reflection is seized and adhered to. The thought is nature itself, and the expression eminently characteristic of Shakespeare. The opening passage has been sadly abused, first, by faulty readers and actors, who either mouth it into indistinctness or else so roll it over the smooth road of stage prosody that it is impossible to tell what meaning is indicated. The second error is that which may be called the child's way of reading, who understands the matter thus:

'If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly.'

"That is, if I am really to do it I had better set about it directly. . . . The emphasis that now probably obtains among intelligent persons is:

'If it were *done* when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly.'

"This method has the merit of not misunderstanding the original, and of presenting to the mind at the first start a grand conception.

"The 'if' means if, when the murder is committed, there were the end of it. So Schiller, in his admirable translation of the play, clearly discerns it: . . . We cannot but perceive, however, that the German translator, though he apprehends the idea aright, foregoes the advantage of using precisely the same word, repeated immediately in an altered sense, which gives such a power to the English text. This is one of Shakespeare's bold peculiarities, and a great favorite with him, as the careful reader of his works will see. Two instances, at least, occur in this very tragedy:

'Cleanse the *stuffed* bosom of that perilous *stuff*,'

and

'Those he *commands* move only in *command*.' . . .

"Macbeth professes to defy religion, and to care nothing for the threatened retributions of another world; but he dreads the avenging of his crimes 'here':

'But here, upon this bank and shoal of time.'

This description, by the way, of the guilty Thane, thinking only of the earth, with its shattering fortunes, and of the present life, with its petty space 'and its brief candle,' its creeping

to-morrows and its yesterdays, that do nothing but light fools to their death, is wondrously sustained in every part of the play, till at last he cries out in despair:

> 'I 'gin to be a-weary of the sun,
> And wish the estate of the world
> were now undone.' "

l. 4. **his surcease.** *His* must refer either to Duncan or to his *assassination*, in which case it is used in place of *its*. Which is the better rendering?

Surcease, according to Clarendon, was a legal term meaning the arrest or stoppage of a suit, or superseding a jurisdiction. Staunton gives the meaning of this passage as follows: "If the assassination were an absolutely final act, and could shut up all consecution, — 'be the be-all and end-all' even of this life only, — we would run the hazard of the future state."

l. 7. **Jump.** In the sense of risk.

Cf. *Coriolanus*, III.:

> "You that prefer a noble life before a long, and wish
> To jump a body with a dangerous physic
> That's sure of death without it."

l. 8. **Here.** This evidently refers to this life, where *judgment* or punishment awaits the offender.

l. 17. **Faculties.** In the sense of prerogatives or powers.

l. 18. **Clear.** Blameless.

ll. 19–25. Macbeth portrays here, in striking figures and with deepest pathos, the consequences of Duncan's murder.

l. 25. Delius says: "This image of a shower of tears, in

which the storm of passion expends itself, is very common in Shakespeare."

l. 26. This passage has been variously interpreted. Probably the simplest and best explanation is given by Knight, who says:

"Macbeth compares his intent to a courser. I have no spur to urge him on. Unprepared I am about to vault into my seat, but I overleap myself and fall. It appears to us that the sentence is broken by the entrance of the messenger; that it is not complete in itself, and would not have been completed with 'side.'"

l. 28. Macbeth's purpose wavers. Fear of consequences first, and then his sense of hospitality and of Duncan's gentleness and merit, contend mightily with his ambition. Shakespeare makes it very plain that, left to himself, he would never have done the deed.

l. 34. Is this the proper use of "would"?

Clarendon says: "The modern usage of 'shall' and 'will,' 'should' and 'would,' now perfectly logical and consistent, has been gradually refined and perfected. In the time of Shakespeare and Bacon these words were employed arbitrarily and irregularly. . . ."

ll. 35–36. Notice the mixed metaphor. In the same line **hope** is made both a garment and a person.

l. 37. **Green and pale.** Referring to the appearance Hope presents upon awaking from her drunkenness.

l. 38. Here seems to be another incongruity. Hope is represented as looking backward instead of forward. May not these three lines be an index of Lady Macbeth's state of mind? She sees her husband faltering, where her own purpose

has become both fixed and supreme. She recognizes his fear, and also his compunctions of conscience, and for both she has nothing but scorn and contempt, which well up in the most vehement language at her command. Refinements of thought and expression are thrown to the winds, and she breaks forth in strong, breathless sentences, which pierce the armor of her husband's conceit, sweep away his sophistries, and bend him to her will. In her impassioned utterance this passage would need no interpretation or apology.

l. 39. "From this time I account thy love for me as no more genuine than the hope thou hast cherished to become king." — Delius.

l. 44. Notice that Lady Macbeth attacks him at his most vulnerable point. He is ambitious, but his ambition may wait upon his prudence. She strikes straight home when she charges him not only with inconsistency, but even with cowardice. This implication at once scatters his mercy to the winds. Furthermore, she assures him that if he falters now she will value his love as little as she does his moral courage.

l. 45. **Cat.** This adage is given in *Adagia Scotica* in the following form: "Ye breed of the cat: ye would fain have fish, but ye have no will to wet your feet."

ll. 46–47. This exalted sentiment, if actually uttered by Macbeth, marks the last rally of his better self before the withering words of his wife. While this reading is no doubt authentic, it is interesting to note that the folios give the last line "Who dares *no* more is none."

l. 48. **Beast.** Lady Macbeth scornfully asks: "If you say this device could not be conceived by a *man*, what *beast* was it that made you break the enterprise to me?" Collier reads

boast instead of *beast*. Which reading best expresses her passion?

l. 52. **Adhere.** In the sense of "to be favorable."

l. 52. The fact now becomes plain that the murder of the king had been previously discussed by them.

l. 58. In this passage Lady Macbeth works herself up into a frenzy, until her last words are shrieked out in entire abandonment of all womanly feeling. Not the mother, but the demons whom she has invoked, speak here.

l. 59. **We fail!** This line has been variously punctuated, — with an interrogation point, an exclamation point, and a period. What changes in the sense would be indicated by these changes in punctuation?

l. 64. **Convince.** To overcome.

l. 67. A contraction of *alembic*, a vessel for distillations.

l. 71. **Spongy.** Because they absorbed so much liquor.

l. 72. **Quell.** Murder, derived from the same Saxon word as kill.

l. 82. Observe how shrewdly she has found his most vulnerable points, and how quickly she overcomes his scruples. But when she has fixed his resolution, and the crime is determined upon, she resigns the leadership to him and resumes her womanly characteristics, which, for the moment, the exigencies of the situation have compelled her to lay aside.

Act II, Scene I

The festivities of the evening are over and the guests have retired to rest. One only, Banquo, seems to have suspected

Macbeth's designs. The straightforward and natural course, in such an event, would have been to inform the king and to stand guard over his person. Yet Banquo does not do this, and we note the fact with surprise. It is possible, of course, that his suspicions are too vague and ill-defined to excite him to action. But on the other hand we ask ourselves if ambition has not been awakened in his bosom, as well as in Macbeth's, by the predictions of the weird sisters, by whom, it is true, Macbeth had been awarded the more immediate honors, but he the more lasting. To an extent his fate is linked with Macbeth's. Is it possible that this trusted friend of the king, this soul of honor, has also been corrupted by the fell design and has determined to let matters take their course without interference on his part? The following scene should be studied carefully with this question in mind.

It is difficult to locate the scene of this encounter between Banquo and Macbeth. It must be near the bedchamber and yet under the open sky. It is probable that the author had in mind an open court with galleries around the sides, reached by stairways, from which the chambers opened.

l. 2. **Clock.** When were clocks first invented?

l. 4. Why does he deliver up his sword? Does he fear he may, else, have occasion to draw it in a cause in which he would prefer to remain neutral?

l. 5. **Take thee that too.** The reference is probably to a dagger.

l. 7. Why not?

l. 9. As he afterwards says he has been dreaming of the weird sisters, and his dreams have shocked him, what is the inference? Whatever is passing in Banquo's mind his attitude

is contrasted strongly with that of Macbeth. He prays to be delivered from "cursed thoughts," while Macbeth cherishes them and yields. Steevens says: "The one is unwilling to sleep lest the same phantoms should assail him again, while the other is depriving himself of rest through impatience to commit murder."

l. 14. **Offices** probably should be officers, meaning servants.

l. 15. Does this unusual time of conferring the king's gift indicate that Banquo suspects Macbeth's purpose and is seeking to win him from it by calling attention to the king's generosity and his confidence in his host?

l. 16. He has shut himself up in his room, gone to his repose, in measureless content. May this be interpreted in any other way?

ll. 17–19. The meaning is: "Not expecting the king we were unprepared to receive him, hence our entertainment was defective, and not according to our will, which would have freely placed all at his service." The antecedent of **which** is **will**.

l. 21. Is he not trying to sound Macbeth's purpose?

l. 22. "When we can beg an hour of your time to be placed at our service." Notice that Macbeth has already adopted the royal *we*.

l. 25. Macbeth purposely expresses himself obscurely. Yet Banquo can hardly fail to see that he refers to the royal power, which was the subject of the third prophecy of the **Weird Sisters**.

cleave. Distinguish between this word and *cleave* meaning to split.

l. 26. **when 'tis.** When that happens which is promised.

l. 29. His professions are certainly all that could be desired of a loyal subject, but notice that he leaves the king to his fate.

l. 31. He must fortify his purpose and nerve his arm by strong drink, for alcohol strengthens passion and weakens conscience.

l. 33. This apostrophe to the drawn dagger is one of the most dramatic episodes of the entire play. Evidence has already been given that the powers of darkness have interested themselves in Macbeth's career. What then more naturally falls into the spirit of the play, than that their ghostly hands should hold a shadowy dagger before his eyes to show him that he must not now withdraw, and to lead the way to his victim?

Picture the scene. The heavens are clouded over and impenetrable darkness shrouds the castle in unearthly gloom. The silence is impressive, for it is the calm that precedes the fury of the storm. Macbeth, intent upon his deed of horror, is groping his way across the deserted courtyard by the feeble light of a lantern, when suddenly there shines before his eyes, with phosphorescent glow, a drawn dagger, which avoids his hands as he reaches out to clutch it and recedes, dripping with gore, towards the chamber where the gentle king is sleeping. It is only when the imagination of the reader draws such a picture that the horror of the scene can be appreciated.

l. 44. Either his eyes are deceived by his frenzied imagination, or else they actually reveal the existence of that which his other senses cannot discover.

l. 46. **dudgeon.** The wood of the box-tree root, formerly used for dagger handles, hence the handle of a dagger.

gouts, from French *goutte*, and Latin *gutta*, a drop; a term used in falconry meaning a spot on a hawk, hence a drop, a clot.

l. 51. **curtained sleep.** Is *curtained sleeper* preferable? It is so read by many editors.

l. 52. **pale Hecate.** A goddess of undefined attributes, having power over heaven, earth, and the underworld. She was associated with moon-worship, ghosts, shades of the dead, sorcery, and the nether world.

l. 54. **watch** in the sense of signal.

l. 55. **strides** in its usual acceptation does not convey the idea of silent, stealthy motion, yet the word is not wholly incompatible with the sense of the passage as many editors insist. The eagerness of the ravisher or murderer may lead him to take long and hasty, though noiseless, steps toward his victim. In his poem on *Lucrece* Shakespeare represents Tarquin as *stalking* into the chamber. In the *Faerie Queene* Spenser uses the word *stride* in the sense in which it is used here:

> "With easy steps so soft as foot could stride."
> — IV., 8.

l. 59. **present horror.** Horror, here, probably refers to the silence, which may be most horrible to the evil-doer. The prating of the stones would break the dreadful silence of the present, which yet was suited to his fell purpose.

l. 61. **Words** is the subject of **gives.** **Gives** is either an early form of the plural, or else it is altered to suit the rhyme.

SCENE II

l. 2. Does this sentence indicate that she has found it necessary to strengthen her courage with stimulants, or simply that she is emboldened by their helplessness?

l. 3. The hooting of the owl was generally considered omi-

nous. To whom does he here "shriek the sternest good night"?

In Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*, IV., 2, Bosola tells the duchess:

> "I am the common bellman
> That usually is sent to condemned persons
> The night before they suffer."

l. 9. His nervous tension is so great that he shrieks even at a fancied noise.

l. 11. **Hark!** Does this exclamation mark the fatal blow?

l. 14. This sentence is significant in that it shows that the evil spirits which she had invoked had not quite "unsexed her, and filled her from the crown to the toe topful of the direst cruelty."

l. 15. Bodenstedt says: "This whispering, so laconic and yet so heart-piercing, between the two who dare not meet each other's eyes, belongs to the most powerful that the poetry of all ages and all times has created."

l. 18. **Hark!** This word indicates the intense nervous strain under which each is laboring.

l. 24. **Addressed** is here used in the sense of prepared or composed.

l. 28. What does this show in regard to his state of mind?

l. 31. This line shows the inconquerable egotism of Macbeth. Surely murder and prayer do not consort together, yet he wonders why he could not pray when his hands were wet with the blood of the murdered king.

l. 34. **make us mad.** Now that the deed is done its awful reality first dawns upon the mind of Lady Macbeth.

l. 35. The remarkable passage which follows is one of the most pathetic in the whole range of literature. Here is no vision or hallucination, but rather the disordered mind speaking from the depths of despair and remorse.

l. 36. Soft floss or silk. Cf. Drayton, *The Muses' Elysium:*

> "As soft as sleave or sarcinet ever was
> Whereon my Cloris her sweet self reposes."

l. 40. In unfeigned astonishment Lady Macbeth cries, "What do you mean?" Macbeth takes no notice of her question, but continues in the same pathetic strain.

l. 56. To gild with blood was not an uncommon expression in the sixteenth century.

l. 57. **guilt.** This pun, so ill-timed, only serves to heighten the horror of the occasion. Does her conduct in this trying scene indicate that she is more hardened to crime than her husband, or simply that her imagination is less active than his?

l. 63. **One** in the sense of all.

l. 69. **left you unattended,** that is, hath forsaken you.

Scene III

This episode has been criticised as being out of place, and an interruption of the proper action of the play. A close study, however, would seem to lead to a different view. The audience has been wrought up to a fearful tension by the horrors which have been depicted, and this interlude serves as a relief while at the same time it is entirely within the motive of the play. Macbeth has sold himself, body and soul, to the

powers of evil, and the audience recognizing this at once see the propriety of introducing his drunken porter as the guardian of the gates of hell.

l. 2. **porter of hell-gate.** Imagine the drunken porter stumbling in the darkness towards the door, and while he fumbles with the fastenings he mutters and grumbles in the words of the text. He little thinks that there are horrors within that come near to making him in very truth a porter to hell-gate.

old is used here as an intensive or argumentative. See *Merry Wives of Windsor*, I., 4, and *Merchant of Venice*, IV., 2.

l. 5. **farmer.** There is an old story that a farmer living in Peacham had hoarded hay when it was five pounds ten shillings per load, and when it unexpectedly fell to forty and thirty shillings he hung himself through disappointment and vexation, but was cut down by his son before he was quite dead.

l. 6. **come in time.** As the porter subsequently, in similar connections, calls out, "Come in, equivocator," "come in, tailor," this passage should probably mean, *come in*, farmer. Can the word *time* be taken as a whimsical allusion to the farmer?

napkins, frequently used at that time for handkerchiefs.

l. 14. **English tailor.** The joke here may have been found in the fact that *French hose* at that time were very short and small, hence a tailor must be very expert who could steal anything from them. French fashions varied so much, however, that this is at best but a doubtful explanation.

l. 21. **primrose way.** The same expression is used by Ophelia in *Hamlet*, I., iii., 50. In *All's Well that Ends Well*, IV., v., 56, the clown says: " . . . , and they'll be for the flowery way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire "

l. 46. **Is thy master stirring.** It is very difficult to fix the time of Duncan's murder. From the conversation between Banquo and Fleance we may suppose that the time of the meeting with Macbeth was not long after twelve o'clock. In the sleep-walking scene, in Act V., Lady Macbeth says: "One, — two — 'tis time to do't." From this it would seem that the murder occurred shortly after two. On the other hand Macbeth had hardly time to put on his clothes after his excited and almost incoherent conference with his wife before Macduff and Lennox arrived, which could not have been far from six o'clock. The internal evidence as to the time is so conflicting as to leave us wholly in the dark as to Shakespeare's intention.

l. 50. **not yet.** At this point Macbeth's career of dissimulation begins. Notice that at first he strives to maintain the semblance of truthfulness, but soon casts aside this compunction and lies openly and deliberately. In the various phases of his downfall that is not the least interesting which exhibits him gradually ceasing to be frank and truthful until his conscience is stifled, and he dissimulates and lies with reckless abandon. Lying is the most insidious of all vices. When it is once yielded to in the slightest degree it gathers strength and dominion, until it undermines the moral nature of its victim, and strikes the death-blow to his character.

l. 55. **physics** is used in the sense of *heals*. Shakespeare uses it again in the same sense in *Cymbeline*, III., ii., 34; also in *The Winter's Tale*, I., i., 43.

l. 56. Macbeth is not a good dissembler, as Lady Macbeth has already told us. From this time on he blunders constantly in his efforts to conceal his crime. Instead of hesitating before the door and leaving some one else to knock, was it not his best policy to boldly summon the king?

l. 57. **limited**, in the sense of appointed. Macduff was evidently serving as a "Lord of the Bedchamber."

l. 58. Notice that his moral nature has not yet become sufficiently degraded to permit him to tell a falsehood without a qualm. The student should not fail to trace the steps in his moral ruin.

l. 62. **prophesying** may be used in the sense of *solemnly proclaiming.* Is there anything in the context which would make its usual meaning, of *foretelling*, out of place here?

l. 64. **obscure.** Probably hidden, enveloped in darkness. Possibly *the bird which loves the darkness.*

l. 66. **feverous** is a word of rare occurrence. It evidently refers here to the ague. Shakespeare uses it once more in *Coriolanus*, I., i., 61.

l. 69. The use of two negatives to strengthen the negation is common in Shakespeare.

l. 73. The confused metaphor but emphasizes the horror under which Macduff is laboring. The temple can hardly be spoken of as the "Lord's *anointed*," an expression which could apply to Duncan alone, unless used in the Pauline sense, "Ye are temples of the living God."

l. 77. **Gorgon.** Of course the reference is to Medusa.

l. 83. **great doom's image.** The precursor of the judgment day and its similitude.

l. 93. This exclamation is significant. If Lady Macbeth had been innocent she would have thought only of the murder, and would have been overcome with surprise and horror. Now, however, she has anticipated this situation, and has framed her words carefully in the hope that she might avert suspicion. Her

husband's state of mind is wholly different. He seems to have repented of his deed, and is appalled by the situation. Study carefully the conduct of each in this crisis.

l. 112. Macbeth has here made another serious blunder. Up to this time, in the general confusion, suspicion has not been directed against him. The situation is made more grave by his blundering attempts to excuse himself. Lady Macbeth at once sees his mistake, and either really faints, because she sees how her husband is centring suspicion on himself, or else she feigns to do so in order to create a diversion.

l. 117. **outrun.** Both forms of the past were in use in Shakespeare's time. While *outran* would be the better form to-day, the other is sometimes used.

l. 117. **pauser.** The ending *er* is sometimes appended to a noun to signify the agent, especially by Shakespeare, who uses such words as *Roman sworder*, *A moraler*, *Justicers*, *Homagers*, *Truster*, *Causer*, etc.

l. 118. **silver skin**, etc. This speech of Macbeth's is full of forced and unnatural metaphors. It is not the kind of language which an innocent man would have used at this time, but is rather the artificial language of dissimulation, and not the natural expression of an unaffected grief and horror.

His silver skin laced with his golden blood seems far fetched and affected, but may have been suggested by the custom then prevalent of wearing rich garments of cloth of silver laced with gold.

l. 122. **unmannerly breeched.** This expression is very hard to understand; and, were the circumstances under which the words were uttered less strained, we might suppose that an error had been made in copying. Indeed, Johnson suggests the

reading, *unmanly drenched with gore*, and other editors have made similar emendations. Yet it is probably better to retain the original words, for Macbeth's emotion is so great and his fear of detection so agonizing that it is not strange that he becomes incoherent and uses distorted images. The expression probably means that the daggers were covered with blood as with breeches, which were unmannerly because so defiled.

l. 124. **to make's.** Shakespeare frequently uses this abbreviation of *his*.

l. 125. This episode has occasioned much discussion, and is well worth careful consideration on the part of the student. Did Lady Macbeth really faint, or did she only feign to do so?

With her woman's acuteness, she realized that her husband was on the verge of disclosing his secret in his frantic efforts to divert suspicion which had not yet been directed towards him. Something must be done at once to divert attention from him, and allow him a chance to recover his self-possession; and her quick wit enabled her to seize upon the only expedient which would accomplish this object.

On the other hand, it is urged that her powers had been strained to the uttermost, and in this appalling crisis they gave way, and for a time her restless mind was mercifully veiled in unconsciousness.

Whately says: "On Lady Macbeth's seeming to faint, while Banquo and Macduff are solicitous about her, Macbeth, by his unconcern, betrays a consciousness that the fainting was feigned."

Horn says: "Lady Macbeth's amiable powers gave way, and the swoon is real. It moreover gives us an intimation of her subsequent fate."

Bodenstedt says: "Most editors suppose this fainting-fit to

be a pretence, but I am convinced that Shakespeare meant it to be real. Various causes have coöperated to beget in Lady Macbeth a revulsion of feeling, which, from henceforth, constantly increasing, drives her at last to self-destruction. . . . We perceive here the intimation of that internal and natural reaction of her overtaxed powers. Womanhood reasserts its rights."

l. 127. **hid in an auger-hole.** The meaning is that "from the most hidden and unexpected place our fate may rush upon us."

l. 129. **Our tears.** The emphasis is upon *our*, thus contrasting their real grief with the feigned sorrow of their host, whom they undoubtedly suspect of the crime.

l. 130. Great sorrow, in its first strength, is overwhelming, motionless, and tearless.

l. 132. The reference is to the disordered condition of their clothing, as most of them had rushed to the spot before their toilets were completed.

l. 138. Banquo declares himself an unfaltering enemy of treason, no matter what pretence may be divulged in the future to justify this act.

l. 139. **manly readiness** probably means knightly armor.

l. 146. **There's daggers,** etc. Donalbain suspects all men, but most of all his father's nearest of kin, Macbeth.

l. 147. The design to fix the blame upon some innocent person had not yet been carried into effect, or it may mean that the purpose of the murderer is not yet accomplished, and cannot be as long as they, the sons of Duncan, are left alive.

Scene IV

This scene is introduced to give background and perspective, and is not essential to the action of the play. The crime has been committed, and now with a few touches the author makes known to us the portents which accompanied it, and what the world thought of it. The untimely flight of the king's sons has made it possible to cast the suspicion upon them, an explanation which, as a matter of policy, every one accepts, and apparently no one believes. Macbeth has plucked the fruits of the crime, and is already on his way to the coronation stone. Truly events are moving rapidly.

l. 3. **sore.** From A.-S. *sar*, grievous or painful. The word in this sense is in common use in Scotland, as "a sair blow."

l. 4. **trifled.** This is an example of a somewhat common usage among Elizabethan writers, viz., the conversion of a noun or adjective into a verb, generally with an active signification.

l. 4. **knowings.** A rare use of the participle as a noun. It is not used by Shakespeare anywhere else in the plural.

l. 7. **travelling lamp.** The first and second folios have *travailing lamp.* Is emphasis to be laid upon the struggle of the sun to overcome the darkness, or did the author merely use the participle in connection with lamp to show that the sun was meant?

l. 10. In Holinshed's account of the murder of King Duff by Donwald, (A.D. 972), from which Shakespeare evidently derived some of the material for this play, occurs the following passage:

"For the space of six moneths together, after this heinous

murther thus committed, there appeered no sunne by day, nor moone by night in anie part of the realme, but still was the skie covered with continuall clouds, and sometimes suche outragious windes arose, with lightenings and tempests, that the people were in great feare of present destruction."

l. 12. **towering** was a term used in falconry. Milton says: "The bird of Jove stoopt from his aerie tour (airy tower)."

l. 13. **mousing owl.** Note the contrast with towering falcon.

l. 15. **minions** used in its original sense of *favorites.*

> "Immortal minions in their Maker's sight."
> —STIRLING, *Domesday.*

l. 23. Study this passage carefully and see if there is any suggestion that Macduff does not here express his honest opinion.

l. 28. **ravin up**: devour greedily.

l. 31. **Scone.** "The ancient royal city of Scone, supposed to have been the capital of the Pictish kingdom, lay two miles northward from the present town of Perth. It was the residence of the Scottish monarchs, . . . and there was a long series of kings crowned on the celebrated stone enclosed in a chair now used as the seat of our sovereigns at coronations in Westminster Abbey. This stone was removed to Scone from Dunstaffnage, the yet earlier residence of the Scottish kings, by Kenneth II., soon after the founding of the Abbey of Scone by the Culdees in 838, and was transferred by Edward I. to Westminster Abbey in 1296. This remarkable stone is reported to have found its way to Dunstaffnage from the plain of Luz, where it was the pillow of the patriarch Jacob while he dreamed his dream."

l. 33. **Colme-kill** or *Iona*. An ancient burial place. Rogers, in his *Monuments and Monumental Inscriptions of Scotland*, Vol. II., p. 11, says:

"Reilig Durain, the burial place of Oran, is the grand cemetery of the island. In this place of sepulture were interred, according to an early tradition, forty kings of Scotland, two Irish monarchs, a French king, and two Irish princes of the Norwegian race. The last kings who here found sepulchres were Duncan I., slain in 1034, and his assassin and successor, the celebrated Macbeth."

Act III, Scene I

The crime has been committed, and Macbeth rules in the place of the murdered king. Circumstances have made it possible to lay the blame upon the sons of Duncan, and no one dares voice the suspicion which points towards Macbeth. The author now enters upon the most difficult part of his task — to portray the fearful retribution which crime works into the life and character of its perpetrators, and that without human instrumentality. Henceforth Macbeth's career runs rapidly downward. He lives in an atmosphere of crime and dissimulation. He becomes hardened to all dictates of humanity, cruel and utterly corrupt. He hesitated at the first step, but he hesitates now no longer. He felt compassion for his first victim, but now pity visits his heart no more. His wife no longer leads, and ceases soon even to influence him. Love for her, his noblest and purest passion, withers and blights before his merciless ambition, until he is able to hear of her death with merely an impatient, almost fretful, comment. The student should carefully trace each descending step of this unhappy man.

l. 1. Banquo now proceeds to give evidence against himself. The Banquo of Act III. should be compared with the same character in Act I. Is there not more than a suspicion that he, too, is rapidly surrendering himself to his ambition?

l. 7. **speeches shine.** "Appears with all the luster of conspicuous truth." — JOHNSON.

l. 11. It is worthy of notice that with the possible exception of this scene, Macbeth nowhere assumes the "pomp and circumstance" of the kingly state. All the insignia of office are wanting. He makes no display, and appears only as a noble and on terms of equality with his attendant courtiers. Is this on account of the native simplicity of his manners and his hatred of display, or is there a deeper reason?

l. 13. **all-thing** seems to be used adverbially in the sense of *in every way.*

l. 14. **solemn** is used in the sense of ceremonious. There is little in the text to indicate that this was the coronation feast, although it may have been. There has been much discussion as to the length of time which has elapsed between the second and third acts. Is there anything in the text to shed light on this question?

l. 15. **Let — Command.** Inasmuch as *Command* must be antecedent of *which*, and hence substantive, *Let* should be changed to *Lay* or *Set.* If this is done *highness* must be read in the possessive case.

l. 22. **still**: always.

Macbeth suspects that Banquo is engaged in a conspiracy against him, and fears that this ride has some connection with it. Banquo notices it and in parrying Macbeth's inquiries only strengthens his suspicions. Perhaps he intends to do so.

l. 33. As usual Macbeth cannot conceal the feeling which is uppermost in his mind.

l. 34. **therewithal**, meaning in addition to this affair of his "bloody cousins."

l. 42. Macbeth dismisses his Court from his presence under the pretence that their separation will render their reunion all the sweeter. That this is not his real reason the following passage shows.

l. 44. **while then**, till then.

l. 48. Compare this soliloquy with the one at the beginning of the seventh scene in Act I. Notice now the absence of all scruple, and also the different motive that impels him.

l. 48. To be king is nothing, unless to be safely one.

l. 56. See *Antony and Cleopatra*, II., iii., 18. **Genius** in its original meaning was a tutelary deity whose province it was to take care of an individual from the time of his birth, and was the ruling and protecting power over men, place, or things.

l. 63. **with** was formerly used to denote the agent, where now we use *by* more generally.

l. 65. **filed**: defiled.

l. 68. **eternal jewel** undoubtedly means immortal soul, not "eternal salvation."

l. 72. **utterance**, obsolete. From the French *outrance*, meaning to the last extremity.

l. 72. **two Murderers**. It seems to be clear from what follows that these two were not assassins by profession but soldiers whose fortunes had in some way been injured by Banquo.

l. 81. **borne in hand**, deluded by fair promises which he never intended to fulfil.

l. 88. The reference is to Matt. v. 44.

l. 94. **Shoughs**, a kind of shaggy dog. **demi-wolves, a** cross between dogs and wolves. **clept**, the preterite of *clepe*, meaning called. **water-rugs**, a kind of poodle.

l. 95. **valued file** is a list with prices attached.

l. 97. **The housekeeper.** The watch-dog or guardian of the house.

l. 108. Here again Macbeth discloses his true and only motive.

l. 116. **bloody distance.** That is, such a distance as enemies would stand from each other when engaged in deadly combat.

l. 120. **avouch it.** That is, order that my will be accepted as justification of the deed. *Avouch* is from the French *avouer*, which means "to maintain the truth of a statement."

l. 122. **may not** is probably equivalent to *cannot* or *must not.*

wail his fall. Probably *must* should be understood here.

l. 123. **Who** is used instead of the objective *whom*, a usage which was not uncommon in Shakespeare's time, and, indeed, has not entirely disappeared at the present time. To whom is reference made?

l. 130. This line is very obscure, and its interpretation is at best but a matter of conjecture. One editor would change *with* to *by* and make the word *spy* refer to the third murderer, who would notify them of the exact time.

Another would interpret *spy* to mean *espyal* or ***discovery***, thus making the phrase *the exact discovery of the time.*

Another says: "*Spy* is here a noun, from the verb to *spy*, and signifies discovery by secrecy and artifice. 'I will acquaint you with the infallible discovery by secret and cunning examination of the time of Banquo's coming by.'"

Another proposes: "The perfect *span* of time, how soon it will be, the moment on't."

Still another reads: "The precise time when you may espy him coming."

l. 132. **something from** is equivalent to *somewhat away* or *apart from.*

l. 132. **always thought.** A very elliptical expression which may be expanded into "It must always be borne in mind that I myself am to be cleared of all suspicion of complicity in the deed."

l. 134. **rubs.** "In a game of bowls, when a bowl was diverted from its course by an impediment, it was said to 'rub.'" — Clarendon.

l. 140. **straight, straightway.**

Scene II

We are now given a glimpse of Lady Macbeth's feelings. She is no longer the resolute, defiant creature of the first two acts, but a shrinking woman who is already beginning to feel the pangs of remorse. The dark shadow of her crime envelops her whole life. She is no longer her husband's adviser, hardly his confidant. She is still wiser and more self-controlled than he, but her plaintive words at the beginning of this scene indicate both deep-seated misery and profound melancholy.

ll. 4–7. Strutt says: "These four lines seem to belong to

Macbeth, who utters them as he enters, and at the conclusion is addressed by the lady, 'How now,' etc. The querulous spirit which they breathe is much more in character with Macbeth than with his wife."

The student should study this passage carefully and see whether the above emendation is justified. Is it in keeping with Macbeth's mood at this time? Does it not rather give us an insight into Lady Macbeth's real feelings, without which the sleep-walking scene and her death would be unintelligible?

l. 10. **Using** in the sense of entertaining.

l. 12. She can no longer appeal to religion for solace, for she has put it behind her forever. She turns eagerly to philosophy, but evidently she finds there but empty words.

l. 13. **scotch'd.** It is possible that Shakespeare had in mind the old superstition, that if a snake were cut in two, and the parts left near each other, they would grow together again. This seems to be hinted at by the context. It is better, however, to understand *scotch* in its more common signification, — to wound slightly.

"Cumberland . . . was resolved to kill, and not to scotch, the snake of the Jacobite insurrection." — McCARTHY'S *Four Georges*, II., 226.

l. 16. **disjoint.** It is quite probable that *become* should be inserted before disjoint.

both the worlds. This world and the next.

l. 19. He is no longer striving for honor and position, but peace and freedom from fear. Notice the means which he is now ready to employ. Also contrast his state of mind while preparing for the murder of Banquo with that in which he prepared for the murder of the king.

l. 28. Macbeth is evidently no better dissembler than when his wife said: "Your face, my thane, is as an open book, where men may read strange matters."

l. 31. **Present him eminence.** Do him the highest honors. It should be observed that Lady Macbeth, as yet, knows nothing of her husband's plot against Banquo. He has learned his lesson well, and he no longer needs her to spur him on to desperate deeds.

l. 32. The general purport of the passage is to the intent that their royal tenure was unsafe as long as they must flatter, and pretend to give honor to, a man whom they feared. Macbeth is evidently testing his wife to see if she would not suggest the necessity of putting Banquo out of the way. And when she seems to sanction his suggestion, expressed so covertly, he triumphantly discloses the fact that a horrible deed is to be done, but refuses to gratify her curiosity further.

l. 34. **visards**, the same as *vizors*.

l. 38. **nature's copy.** We are told that "man is made in the image of God." With this in mind, it is easy to see how he may be called *nature's* copy. *Copy* may mean, however, the deed by which man holds his tenure of life.

l. 38. **eterne.** Cf. *Hamlet*, II., 2:

> "On Mar's armour forged for proof *eterne*."

l. 41. The dim recesses of cloisters were the favorite haunts of bats.

l. 42. In zoölogy, a **shard** is the hard wing-case of a beetle. Cf. Longfellow's *Hiawatha*, XII.:

> "And the roof of bark upon them
> As the shining shards of beetles."

l. 45. Macbeth no longer needs her help and inspiration, but why does he desire to keep her in ignorance of his design?

l 46. **seeling.** To *seel* is to close the eyes by drawing a thread through them. This was done to hawks, to make them tractable.

l. 49. **great bond.** Is this the bond or promise which the weird sisters made to Banquo?

Cf. *Richard III.*, IV., iv., 77. *Cymbeline* V., iv., 27.

l. 51. **Rooky wood.** Probably meaning only a wood inhabited by rooks, although the word has a provincial meaning of *foggy* or *misty.*

Of this passage Mrs. Kemble says:

"We see the violet-colored sky. We feel the soft, intermitting wind of evening. We hear the solemn lullaby of the dark fir-forest, the homeward flight of the bird suggests the sweetest images of rest and peace; and coupled and contrasting with the gradual falling of the dim veil of twilight over the placid face of nature, the remote horror of the 'deed of fearful note' about to desecrate the solemn repose of the approaching night gives to these harmonious and lovely lines a wonderful effect of mingled terror and beauty."

l. 53. **night's black agents.** Such as murderers, robbers, wild beasts, etc.

l. 56. **go with me.** Evidently this is not an invitation for her to leave the stage with him, but rather to tread with him still further the dark road of crime upon which they have both begun their course.

Scene III

It has been suggested that the third murderer was Macbeth, and there is some reason to believe that this was the case. The

student should watch for points in the text which tend to confirm or disprove this hypothesis.

ll. 2–4. This passage may be read: "We need not distrust him, since he gives us our instructions and tells us what we have to do exactly according to directions."

l. 9. Banquo calls for a light because he and Fleance intend to take a short cut to the castle by a footpath while their groom takes the horse around by the road.

l. 18. Banquo's death must take place on the stage in order that the audience may be prepared for the appearance of the ghost.

l. 18. **Fleance escapes.** Malone says: "Fleance, after the assassination of his father, fled into Wales, where he married the daughter of the prince of that country, by whom he had a son, who afterwards became Lord High Steward of Scotland, and from thence assumed the name of Walter Steward. From him, in a direct line, King James I. was descended, in compliment to whom our author has chosen to describe Banquo, who was equally concerned with Macbeth in the murder of Duncan, as innocent of that crime."

Scene IV

The feast has been long delayed by the absence of Macbeth. Where was he?

ll. 1–2. **at first And last.** All, of whatever degree, and whether they come early or late, are heartily welcome.

l. 3. It is significant that Macbeth keeps himself as much retired as possible, and does not even seat himself at the head of the table.

l. 5. **Our hostess keeps her state.** That is, continues in her chair of state at the head of the table. This was a common use of the word *state* at that time, but it has now become obsolete.

l. 6. **require.** In the sense of *ask.*

l. 11. **anon.** Macbeth has caught sight of the murderer, and desires to dismiss him before drinking the measure.

l. 14. **'Tis better thee without than he within.** The most obvious and commonly accepted meaning of this line is: "It is better outside of you than inside of him"; but Macbeth has not yet descended to such depths as to be capable of such coarseness and brutality. It seems better to understand: "It is better to have you, his murderer, outside the door than to have him within."

l. 15. **Is he dispatch'd?** If this question is asked in good faith, Macbeth could hardly have been the third murderer. The death of Banquo was a matter of vital importance to him; and if he had been ignorant of the outcome of his plot he would have asked the fateful question at once without interposing any remarks. Again, the question sounds hollow, and one cannot read it without feeling that it is a pretence, and that he already knows that Banquo is dead and that Fleance has escaped. If he knows it he must have been present, since evidently the murderers haven't seen him before. This feeling is strengthened by the flippant tone of his next speech.

l. 21. **fit,** disordered mind. Notwithstanding his crime the escape of Fleance has completely frustrated his designs. This passage does not necessarily indicate that he was not aware of Fleance's escape before. In his haste to return to the castle, and realizing that he was keeping his court waiting, he had had

no time to think what this escape meant to him, and now for the first time its full significance dawned upon him.

l. 29. **worm**, from Anglo-Saxon *wyrm*, meaning primarily a serpent or a dragon. Its present meaning is secondary.

l. 33. **the feast is sold.** "That feast can only be considered as sold, not given, during which the entertainers omit such courtesies as may assure their guests that it is given with welcome." — Dyce.

l. 35. **to feed**, that is, eating merely to supply nature's demands.

l. 36. **From thence**: away from home.

l. 37. **Meeting.** Does Shakespeare intend this as a pun? How was *meat* pronounced in his time?

l. 41. It will be noticed that no plate has been laid, nor place reserved, for Banquo. For when the ghost enters there is but one vacant seat, and that is the one in which Macbeth is about to seat himself.

l. 46. **The table's full.** For the first time Macbeth notices that the chair which had been reserved for him was occupied, and by whom? By no one else than the ghost of the man whose name he had just used with the boldest dissimulation.

The ghost which enters here has been the subject of much controversy; first, as to whether it was really a ghost or only an hallucination; and, secondly, as to its personality — whether it was the ghost of Banquo or of Duncan.

It may be objected to the first question that ghosts cannot have an objective existence, although there are many who still believe in them as actual entities. But in this case it is necessary to study only Macbeth's mental state to become convinced

that Banquo's ghost was subjective, an hallucination, which his overwrought mind was unable to distinguish as such. The mysterious dagger had been such an hallucination, and he had easily recognized it; but now the situation is changed, and his overwrought imagination, aided by the brain exhaustion resulting from his sleepless nights, places before him in the empty chair a phantasm which is as real to him as any of his guests. This view is further sanctioned by the fact that none of the others see the ghost, not even Lady Macbeth. In this connection study Lady Macbeth's response, beginning with l. 60.

The second question is more difficult. There is much internal evidence to support both views. "Thou canst not say I did it," points directly to Banquo. "If charnel-houses and our graves must send those that we bury back," etc., would seem to indicate Duncan, since Banquo is not yet buried. Banquo is again referred to in l. 81, "With twenty mortal murders on their crowns." When the ghost reënters Macbeth exclaims, "Avaunt! and quit my sight! Let earth hide thee! Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold." Would this surpassing horror be produced by any less terrible hallucination than that of the ghost of the murdered king? There is much more internal evidence which the student should search for and collate.

It should be said that the stage directions in the original folios are so faulty that they are not entitled to much consideration.

ll. 53–58. Lady Macbeth once more intervenes to shield her husband from suspicion. The readiness with which she meets such emergencies is worthy of notice.

l. 57. **You shall offend him.** Elizabethan authors use *shall*

to denote inevitable futurity. Here it means, "You are sure to offend him."

l. 58. **Are you a man?** What follows seems to be unnoticed by the company. It is possible that Lady Macbeth takes her husband aside and talks with him in a lower tone of voice, yet his own half-frantic exclamations could hardly have been uttered in a subdued tone.

l. 60. **proper stuff**: mere nonsense.

l. 64. **Impostors** (compared) **to true fear.**

l. 76. **gentle weal.** Clarendon says: "*Gentle* is here to be taken proleptically: 'Ere humane statute purged the common weal and made it gentle.'"

l. 85. **muse**: to wonder or be amazed.

l. 92. **all to all**: *all* (love, health, and general joy) *to all* present.

l. 95. **speculation** is used in the sense of intelligence which shines out through the eyes.

l. 96. Lady Macbeth is out of patience as well as apprehensive of the effect of her husband's insane words upon those present. For him she has no further expostulations, for she knows they are useless. Her one thought now is to get rid of the company before he commits himself too far.

l. 101. **Hyrcan tiger.** The name Hyrcania was given to the country south of the Caspian Sea.

l. 105. **inhabit.** Many editors read *inhibit*, but it is better to retain the original word, which may mean here, "If through fear *I stay at home.*"

l. 112. **You make me strange,** etc. Evidently Macbeth be-

lieves that the whole company have seen the ghost, and he is led to doubt his own courage when he sees them unmoved by the horror which has unmanned him.

l. 122. **It will have blood.** Macbeth remorsefully feels that the murders of which he has been guilty will not go unpunished.

l. 125. **maggot-pies**, magpies.

l. 127. Night and morning press so hard upon each other that they are almost contending, which is which.

l. 128. It appears that Macbeth had invited Macduff to the feast and he had refused to come. Macbeth here suddenly changes the subject and asks his wife what she thinks about Macduff's refusal.

l. 129. **Did you send to him, sir?** This appellation shows that Lady Macbeth has become subjugated to her husband. She is no longer the bold, dauntless spirit urging him on to deeds of blood, but she has become his timid, shrinking servant, and she evidently surmises at once why Macduff has been summoned.

l. 141. Recall the prophecy which rang in his ears when he came out of Duncan's death-chamber.

l. 142. **self-abuse**, self-deception.

l. 143. **initiate fear**, the fear of a beginner.

Scene V

l. 1. **Hecate.** It seems rather out of place to bring Hecate down to the level of common Scottish witches and to mix her up in their incantations, yet Shakespeare has not been the only one guilty of this atrocity.

angerly, a shortened form of anger-like, cf. manly.

l. 2. **beldams.** This word was originally a term of respectful address, meaning a good or beautiful lady, but it finally came to have quite the opposite meaning, of an ugly *old woman, a hag.*

l. 7. **close**, in the sense of *secret.* Cf. *Richard III.*, IV., 2:

> "Knowest thou not any whom corrupting gold
> Would tempt into a close exploit of death?"

l. 15. **Acheron.** The original Acheron was a river in Greece. The name was given to one of the rivers in Hades. Clarke says: "The witches are poetically made to give this name to some foul tarn or gloomy pool in the neighborhood of Macbeth's castle, where they habitually assemble."

l. 24. **drop profound** probably means a drop which was possessed of powerful qualities. The moon was supposed to exert a strong and mystic influence upon the earth.

l. 26. **magic sleights** means *magic arts.*

l. 32. **security**, that is, *a fancied security.*

Scene VI

This scene, which at first seems to be disconnected from the action of the play, is introduced to show the state of public opinion and to give the audience a hint of the various forces which are concentrating against Macbeth.

It is difficult to see why a nameless lord should be introduced here. Johnson conjectures that the original copy read *Lenox and An.*, the abbreviation for Angus, for which the transcriber substituted the present reading.

l. 3. **borne**: conducted. So in l. 17.

l. 8. **Who cannot want the thought.** The sense evidently requires the substitution of *can* for *cannot*, and some editors have made this change. A writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, (July, 1869), however, says: "The passage as it stands is perfectly good sense, and perfectly good English of Shakespeare's day, as it still remains perfectly good Northern English or Lowland Scotch of our own day. In these dialects the word *want*, especially when construed with negative particles, has precisely the meaning which the critics insist the sense requires. If a farmer in the North of England, or the Scotch Lowlands, send to borrow a neighbor's horse, and receives a negative reply, it would probably be conveyed in some such form as, 'He says he cannot want the horse to-day,' that is, he cannot do without the horse; he must have the horse for his own use. . . . This use of the verb was not uncommon among the writers of Shakespeare's day."

l. 10. **fact.** "Shakespeare continually uses the word in a bad sense, as of an evil deed. Nowhere does he use it in the sense of reality as opposed to fiction." — Delius.

l. 19. **an't.** This use of *and* in the sense of *if* is archaic. Used in this sense it has been generally distinguished by writing it *an* or *an'*, but this has never required a distinction in pronunciation.

l. 21. **from**, in the sense of *in consequence of.*

l. 40. **"Sir, not I."** The construction is: "And the cloudy messenger turns me his back with an absolute 'Sir, not I' (received in answer from Macduff), and hums, as who should say," etc. — Dyce.

l. 41. **cloudy**: ominous, foreboding.

me: equivalent to the dative of reference in Latin.

Act IV, Scene I

Again the witches appear as instruments to influence the career of Macbeth at an important crisis of his life. He has now abandoned all shame, and openly consults them in regard to his future career. From their specious predictions he gains new confidence, while the phenomena which they exhibit inspire awe, and indicate a power and prescience such as the reader has not previously ascribed to them. Yet, notwithstanding this, they exhibit such an utter barrenness of all virtue, such total depravity, that Macbeth, who appears as a partner in their evil designs, loses what remnant of sympathy has hitherto been accorded him, and all are ready to see him crushed, — indeed there is an eager longing that the retribution, which his crimes so richly deserve, be overwhelming. He has apparently reached the bottom level of his course. His aspirations have no single element of virtue left in them, and his existence stretches out before him a dreary waste of crime, at the end of which is sure disaster. It is not necessary to study this ghostly scene critically. It is designed to teach a moral lesson, which even a careless reader can hardly miss.

l. 3. **Harpier**: probably a misspelling or a misprint for *harpy*.

l. 8. **Swelter'd venom.** "There is a paper by Dr. Davy in the *Philosophical Transactions* of 1826, in which it is shown that the toad *is* venomous, and moreover that *sweltered venom* is peculiarly proper, the poison lying diffused over the body immediately under the skin. This is the second instance in

this play of Shakespeare's minute exactness in his natural history." — HUNTER.

l. 12. "Shakespeare so weaves his incantations as to cast a spell upon the mind, and force its acquiescence in what he represents. Explode as we may the witchcraft which he describes, there is no exploding the witchcraft of his description, the effect springing not so much from what he borrows as from his own ordering thereof." — HUDSON.

l. 43. "**Black spirits,**" etc. This song is given in Middleton's play, *The Witch*, V., ii., as follows:

> "Black spirits and white, red spirits and gray,
> Mingle, mingle, mingle, ye that mingle may."

l. 44. **pricking.** It was an ancient superstition that any sudden pain in the body which could not be accounted for foreboded some event in the future.

l. 59. **germins.** This word has been variously read, as *germaine*, *germain*, *german*, *germen*, and *germins*. How would these different readings modify the meaning?

l. 65. **farrow**: from Anglo-Saxon *fearh*, a little pig, or a litter of pigs.

l. 68. **First Apparition.** The armed head is supposed to represent the head of Macbeth, which was doomed to be cut off by Macduff.

l. 76. **Second Apparition.** The bloody child represents Macduff, who was born untimely. Observe that this second apparition was more potent than the first.

l. 87. **Third Apparition.** This apparition undoubtedly represents Malcolm, who was to succeed Macbeth. See Malcolm's command to his soldiers, V., iv.

l. 94. Notice how artfully Macbeth's confidence in his future safety has been strengthened. His doom inevitably awaits him, and towards it all the currents of his life are tending; yet the witches have so blinded his eyes that he will not see it until it is upon him.

l. 121. **The two-fold balls** represent the two independent kingdoms of England and Scotland, which were to be united under one sovereignty, in 1603, by James I. **The treble sceptres** may refer to the union with Ireland, which was to occur in the more remote future.

l. 127. Notice the fiendish sarcasm of this passage.

l. 135. Macbeth has become so hardened that he receives messengers of state at this interview without a blush of apology.

l. 150. This passage is inserted in order that there may be no doubt as to Macbeth's agency in the murder of Macduff's unfortunate family.

Scene II

This pathetic scene is introduced to show the depths of merciless cruelty into which Macbeth has fallen, and to deprive him of the last vestige of pity which up to this moment has lingered in the minds of the audience. His sin has now brought forth in him its perfect fruit, and his depravity has become complete and hideous. No more powerful picture has ever been drawn of a man in whose breast the last spark of humanity has been extinguished.

l. 4. **traitors.** His flight was apparent evidence of his treason.

l. 17. **fits o' the season.** "What befits the season."—Steevens.

"We still say figuratively, 'the temper of the times.'" — Singer.

"The critical conjunctures of the times. The figure is taken from the fits of an intermittent fever." — Clarendon.

Study this passage and decide which one of these interpretations best fits the purpose of the author.

ll. 19–20. "Our fear makes us credit every *rumor*, yet we have not what we *fear*."

l. 22. **Each way and move.** This passage is very obscure. Is it better to make *move* a verb connected by *and* with *float*, or to make it a noun similarly connected with *way*?

l. 47. **swears and lies.** Swears allegiance and perjures himself. In l. 51 these words are used in their ordinary sense.

l. 65. **state of honour.** This seems to refer not only to her position as mistress of the castle, but also to her kindly and virtuous disposition.

l. 71. **To do worse** is evidently to let them remain unwarned. It is possible that this messenger is one of the murderers dispatched by Macbeth who has outstripped his companions to give this warning. If this should be the case what change in the interpretation of this passage would become necessary?

l. 83. **shag-ear'd** was nothing more than an abusive epithet which was in common use.

Scene III

This scene serves two purposes, to show the increasing detestation in which Macbeth is held by the people, and also to show how Macduff is urged on to a revenge which shall not be satisfied until Macbeth is overthrown. Malcolm has not, hitherto,

appeared as a strong character, hence this scene is necessary also to show him in his true nature and to gain the sympathies of the audience in his behalf. Clarendon says: "The poet no doubt felt that this scene was needed to supplement the meagre parts assigned to Malcolm and Macduff." Does it seem to be written merely to fill in?

l. 15. **deserve.** The folios read *discerne* or *discern*, so that the passage would read: "You may see something to your advantage by betraying me." Would not the same meaning be better expressed by retaining *deserve?*

and wisdom. This is probably an elliptical expression with *it is* omitted.

l. 19. **recoil,** used in the sense of *yield* or *give way.*

l. 20. **imperial charge.** Is charge used in the sense of commission, or does the figure refer to the charge of an imperial army?

l. 21. The sense is, "If you are virtuous my thoughts cannot make you otherwise."

ll. 26–28. Malcolm wonders that Macduff has fled, leaving his family in the power of Macbeth, and from this fact he fears treachery at Macduff's hands.

l. 50. Malcolm shows his youth and inexperience in his bungling attempts to test Macduff's loyalty.

l. 71. **Convey.** Collier reads *enjoy. Convey* may have the meaning of *to manage secretly.* Cf. *King Lear*, I., 2: "I will *convey* the business as I shall find means." From the sense which appears the better reading?

l. 86. **summer-seeming.** Referring to the summer's heat, which burns for a time and passes away, equivalent to *transient.*

l. 99. **Uproar.** This word is nowhere else used as a verb. Is it likely that *uproot* was intended?

l. 111. **Died**, etc. Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 31.

l. 143. Edward the Confessor was the first English king to claim that he was possessed of the healing touch. The power was claimed by succeeding sovereigns as late as Queen Anne.

l. 177. In what sense is **well** used?

l. 215. **He has no children.** This may refer to Macbeth. If so, the inference is either that Macbeth had no children or his feelings as a father would have kept him from the deed, or that since he has no children Macduff cannot wreak revenge upon him through them. But the reference may be to Malcolm, and if so merely means that since he has no children he cannot understand a father's grief. Which of these interpretations best accords with Macduff's grief? Which is the most vigorous and natural?

l. 220. Notice the effect of this terrible news upon Macduff. At first he does not comprehend it, then he is overcome with grief, and finally comes the overwhelming desire for vengeance.

l. 225. **naught** in the sense of bad. Macduff realizes that they were slain on account of Macbeth's hatred of himself, and not because of any demerits of their own.

l. 239. This is a conflict which the powers of heaven are waging against all that is evil, personified in Macbeth, and Malcolm refers to himself and his friends as the instruments of the heavenly powers.

Act V, Scene I

This scene is probably the most powerful and artistic in the whole play. The supreme punishment which is to be meted

out to Macbeth and his wife is not death, but the more fearful pangs of remorse. True, they are to die, but death comes rather as a relief than as a punishment. Nowhere else in all literature is the terrible anguish of a guilty conscience, keenly alive to its own sin, so pathetically portrayed. It must be remembered that neither Macbeth nor Lady Macbeth is aware that their instrumentality in the death of Duncan is known. With strange fatuity they believe that the secret is still theirs alone.

After the stormy close of the last scene the quiet atmosphere of this chamber and the subdued conversation of the gentlewoman and physician impart a feeling of horror which deepens as the action progresses.

l. 6. No doubt a reminiscence of the letter she had received from Macbeth.

l. 26. Recall her invocation to thick night in Act I., Sc. 5. Now she dares not stay in the dark.

l. 32. When the blood was really on her hands she had said: "A little water clears us of this deed."

l. 47. She knew nothing of the murder of Lady Macduff in advance. In what sense was she a sharer in the guilt of that crime?

l. 70. She here goes back to the banquet scene where the ghost of Banquo appeared.

l. 71. The physician now perceives the cause of her perturbation.

Scene II

l. 5. **mortified man.** Probably the man who had abandoned himself to despair.

l. 15. **cause.** Some editors read *course.* Which is preferable?

l. 18. **minutely.** This may be either an adjective or an adverb. Which is the more natural construction?

l. 27. **medicine** refers to Malcolm, which may be understood as the antecedent of *him.*

l. 30. **sovereign** may mean both royal and remedial. How should it be understood here?

SCENE III

l. 3. **taint with fear.** *Taint* is used intransitively, "I cannot become tainted."

l. 15. **patch.** A fool was often called a *patch* on account of his motley dress.

l. 19. The Seytons of Touch were the hereditary armor-bearers of the Kings of Scotland.

l. 21. **cheer.** Read *chair*, in sense of throne, by many editors. Study the passage and decide which is better.

l. 22. Is it difficult to see how his **way of life** could **fall into the sear, the yellow leaf?** Would it be better to change *way* to *May?* Can the reading of the text be justified and explained?

l. 24. **old age.** Does this expression give any indication of the time which has passed since the murder of Duncan?

l. 40. Notice that there is not a trace of genuine sympathy in all that Macbeth says about his wife.

l. 49. **send out.** An incomplete sentence, no doubt referring to his previous order to Seyton to send out more horses.

Scene IV

l. 2. Possibly referring to his father's murder, or to the spies mentioned in Act III., Sc. 4, as prowling about private chambers and listening at key-holes.

l. 3. **Birnam** is a high hill near Dunkeld, twelve miles from Dunsinane, and not far from Perth.

l. 11. This passage is very obscure, and has been given several different interpretations. It may mean that where an opportunity was given both nobles and common people have deserted him. Possibly it should read "For where there is advantage to be gained."

l. 15. "In order that our opinions may be just, let them await the event that will test their truth."

Scene V

l. 5. **forced.** Reinforced by defections from Macbeth's followers.

l. 17. Meaning that now is an inopportune time to die. The future would have brought a fitter time. Arrowsmith construes differently. He says: "So far is Macbeth from regarding one time more convenient than another that the whole tenor of his subsequent remarks evinces his conviction to be that it makes no odds at what point in the dull round of days a man's life may terminate. If she had not died now, reasons he, she would have died hereafter; there would have been a time when such tidings must have been brought, — such a tale told."

l. 22. Hunter says: "There is something in this passage partaking of the desperation of the thane's position, and perhaps intended to show what thoughts possess a mind like his,

burdened with heavy guilt, and having some reason to think that retribution is at hand."

It is to be noticed that the announcement of his wife's death has hardly interrupted the strain of his moralizing, and furthermore that his thoughts are entirely upon himself.

l. 40. The word **cling** means here *to shrink.*

Scene VIII

l. 34. In an old stage copy of this play Macbeth falls within sight of the audience, and gives utterance to the following words with his last breath:

> " 'Tis done! the scene of life will quickly close,
> Ambition's vain delusive dreams are fled,
> And now I wake to darkness, guilt, and horror;
> I cannot bear it! Let me shake it off —
> It will not be; my soul is clogged with blood.
> I cannot rise! I dare not ask for mercy —
> It is too late, hell drags me down; I sink,
> I sink, — my soul is lost forever! Oh! — Oh!" [*Dies.*

" In the park of Belmont a tumulus called Belliduff is associated with the tradition that here Macduff slew Macbeth, while a whinstone nodule of twenty tons' weight, about a mile distant, is known as Macbeth's stone. According to history Macbeth was slain at Lunphanan in Kincardineshire." — Rogers.

Hallam in his introduction to the *Literature of Europe* says:

" The majority of readers, I believe, assign to Macbeth . . . the preëminence among the works of Shakespeare; many, however, would rather name Othello, and a few might prefer Lear to either. The great epic drama, as the first may be called, deserves, in my own judgment, the post it has attained, as being, in the language of Drake, 'the greatest effort of our author's genius, the most sublime and impressive drama which the world has ever beheld.' "

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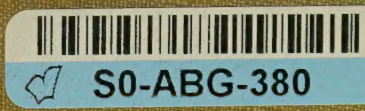
a type of active
courage!

Episode – Vision of
dagger.

Main Action – Motive – Macbeth
Ambition.

Subordinate actions
Witches + Banquo.
Events – Fleeing of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